

English GRAMMAR BOOK

The Verb



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English Grammar Book

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Conditionals

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Gerunds

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Irregular Verbs

Phrasal Verb Intro & Dictionary

Verb + Preposition Dictionary

Types of Verbs

Before you begin the verb tense lessons, it is extremely important to understand that NOT all English verbs are the same. English verbs are divided into three groups: Normal Verbs, Non-Continuous Verbs, and Mixed Verbs.

Group I Normal Verbs

Most verbs are "Normal Verbs." These verbs are usually physical actions which you can see somebody doing. These verbs can be used in all tenses.

Normal Verbs

to run, to walk, to eat, to fly, to go, to say, to touch, etc.

Examples:

- I eat dinner every day.
- I am eating dinner now.

Group II Non-Continuous Verbs

The second group, called "Non-Continuous Verbs," is smaller. These verbs are usually things you cannot see somebody doing. These verbs are rarely used in continuous tenses. They include:

Abstract Verbs

to be, to want, to cost, to seem, to need, to care, to contain, to owe, to exist...

Possession Verbs

to possess, to own, to belong...

Emotion Verbs

to like, to love, to hate, to dislike, to fear, to envy, to mind...

Examples:

- He is needing help now. **Not Correct**
- He needs help now. **Correct**
- He is wanting a drink now. **Not Correct**
- He wants a drink now. **Correct**

Group III Mixed Verbs

The third group, called "Mixed Verbs," is the smallest group. These verbs have more than one meaning. In a way, each meaning is a unique verb. Some meanings behave like "Non-Continuous Verbs," while other meanings behave like "Normal Verbs."

Mixed Verbs

to appear, to feel, to have, to hear, to look, to see, to weigh...

List of Mixed Verbs with Examples and Definitions:

to appear:

- **Donna appears confused. Non-Continuous Verb**
DONNA SEEKS CONFUSED.
- **My favorite singer is appearing at the jazz club tonight. Normal Verb**
MY FAVORITE SINGER IS GIVING A PERFORMANCE AT THE JAZZ CLUB TONIGHT.

to have:

- **I have a dollar now. Non-Continuous Verb**
I POSSESS A DOLLAR.
- **I am having fun now. Normal Verb**
I AM EXPERIENCING FUN NOW.

to hear:

- **She hears the music. Non-Continuous Verb**
SHE HEARS THE MUSIC WITH HER EARS.
- **She is hearing voices. Normal Verb**
SHE HEARS SOMETHING OTHERS CANNOT HEAR. SHE IS HEARING VOICES IN HER MIND.

to look:

- **Nancy looks tired. Non-Continuous Verb**
SHE SEEKS TIRED.
- **Farah is looking at the pictures. Normal Verb**
SHE IS LOOKING WITH HER EYES.

to miss:

- **John misses Sally. Non-Continuous Verb**
HE IS SAD BECAUSE SHE IS NOT THERE.
- **Debbie is missing her favorite TV program. Normal Verb**
SHE IS NOT THERE TO SEE HER FAVORITE PROGRAM.

to see:

- **I see her. Non-Continuous Verb**
I SEE HER WITH MY EYES.
- **I am seeing the doctor. Normal Verb**
I AM VISITING OR CONSULTING WITH A DOCTOR. (ALSO USED WITH DENTIST AND LAWYER.)
- **I am seeing her. Normal Verb**
I AM HAVING A RELATIONSHIP WITH HER.
- **He is seeing ghosts at night. Normal Verb**
HE SEES SOMETHING OTHERS CANNOT SEE. FOR EXAMPLE GHOSTS, AURA, A VISION OF THE FUTURE, ETC.

to smell:

- **The coffee smells good. Non-Continuous Verb**
THE COFFEE HAS A GOOD SMELL.
- **I am smelling the flowers. Normal Verb**
I AM SNIFFING THE FLOWERS TO SEE WHAT THEIR SMELL IS LIKE.

to taste:

- **The coffee tastes good. Non-Continuous Verb**
THE COFFEE HAS A GOOD TASTE.
- **I am tasting the cake. Normal Verb**
I AM TRYING THE CAKE TO SEE WHAT IT TASTES LIKE.

to think:

- **He thinks the test is easy. Non-Continuous Verb**
HE CONSIDERS THE TEST TO BE EASY.
- **She is thinking about the question. Normal Verb**
SHE IS PONDERING THE QUESTION, GOING OVER IT IN HER MIND.

to weigh:

- **The table weighs a lot. Non-Continuous Verb**
THE TABLE IS HEAVY.
- **She is weighing herself. Normal Verb**
SHE IS DETERMINING HER WEIGHT.

Some Verbs Can Be Especially Confusing:

to be:

- **Joe is American. Non-Continuous Verb**
JOE IS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN.
- **Joe is being very American. Normal Verb**
JOE IS BEHAVING LIKE A STEREOTYPICAL AMERICAN.
- **Joe is being very rude. Normal Verb**
JOE IS BEHAVING VERY RUDELY. USUALLY HE IS NOT RUDE.
- **Joe is being very formal. Normal Verb**
JOE IS BEHAVING VERY FORMALLY. USUALLY HE IS NOT FORMAL.

NOTICE: Only rarely is "to be" used in a continuous form. This is most commonly done when a person is temporarily behaving badly or stereotypically. It can also be used when someone's behavior is noticeably different.

to feel:

- **The massage feels great. Non-Continuous Verb**
THE MASSAGE HAS A PLEASING FEELING.
- **I don't feel well today. Sometimes used as Non-Continuous Verb**
I AM A LITTLE SICK.
- **I am not feeling well today. Sometimes used as Normal Verb**
I AM A LITTLE SICK.

NOTICE: The second meaning of "feel" is very flexible and there is no real difference in meaning between "I don't feel well today" and "I am not feeling well today."

Active / Passive Verb Forms

Sentences can be active or passive. Therefore, tenses also have "active forms" and "passive forms." You must learn to recognize the difference to successfully speak English.

Active Form

In active sentences, the thing doing the action is the subject of the sentence and the thing receiving the action is the object. Most sentences are active.

[Thing doing action] + [verb] + [thing receiving action]

Examples:

The professor	teaches	the students.
subject	verb	object
doing action		receiving action

John	washes	the dishes.
subject	verb	object
doing action		receiving action

Passive Form

In passive sentences, the thing receiving the action is the subject of the sentence and the thing doing the action is optionally included near the end of the sentence. You can use the passive form if you think that the thing receiving the action is more important or should be emphasized. You can also use the passive form if you do not know who is doing the action or if you do not want to mention who is doing the action.

[Thing receiving action] + [be] + [past participle of verb] + [by] + [thing doing action]

Examples:

The students	are taught	by the professor.
subject	passive verb	
receiving action		doing action

The dishes	are washed	by John.
subject	passive verb	
receiving action		doing action

Active / Passive Overview

	Active	Passive
Simple Present	Once a week, Tom cleans the house.	Once a week, the house is cleaned by Tom.
Present Continuous	Right now, Sarah is writing the letter.	Right now, the letter is being written by Sarah.
Simple Past	Sam repaired the car.	The car was repaired by Sam.
Past Continuous	The salesman was helping the customer when the thief came into the store.	The customer was being helped by the salesman when the thief came into the store.
Present Perfect	Many tourists have visited that castle.	That castle has been visited by many tourists.
Present Perfect Continuous	Recently, John has been doing the work.	Recently, the work has been being done by John.
Past Perfect	George had repaired many cars before he received his mechanic's license.	Many cars had been repaired by George before he received his mechanic's license.
Past Perfect Continuous	Chef Jones had been preparing the restaurant's fantastic dinners for two years before he moved to Paris.	The restaurant's fantastic dinners had been being prepared by Chef Jones for two years before he moved to Paris.
Simple Future <i>WILL</i>	Someone will finish the work by 5:00 PM.	The work will be finished by 5:00 PM.
Simple Future <i>BE GOING TO</i>	Sally is going to make a beautiful dinner tonight.	A beautiful dinner is going to be made by Sally tonight.
Future Continuous <i>WILL</i>	At 8:00 PM tonight, John will be washing the dishes.	At 8:00 PM tonight, the dishes will be being washed by John.

Future Continuous <i>BE GOING TO</i>	At 8:00 PM tonight, John is going to be washing the dishes.	At 8:00 PM tonight, the dishes are going to be being washed by John.
Future Perfect <i>WILL</i>	They will have completed the project before the deadline.	The project will have been completed before the deadline.
Future Perfect <i>BE GOING TO</i>	They are going to have completed the project before the deadline.	The project is going to have been completed before the deadline.
Future Perfect Continuous <i>WILL</i>	The famous artist will have been painting the mural for over six months by the time it is finished.	The mural will have been being painted by the famous artist for over six months by the time it is finished.
Future Perfect Continuous <i>BE GOING TO</i>	The famous artist is going to have been painting the mural for over six months by the time it is finished.	The mural is going to have been being painted by the famous artist for over six months by the time it is finished.
Used to	Jerry used to pay the bills.	The bills used to be paid by Jerry.
Would Always	My mother would always make the pies.	The pies would always be made by my mother.
Future in the Past <i>WOULD</i>	I knew John would finish the work by 5:00 PM.	I knew the work would be finished by 5:00 PM.
Future in the Past <i>WAS GOING TO</i>	I thought Sally was going to make a beautiful dinner tonight.	I thought a beautiful dinner was going to be made by Sally tonight.

Simple Present

FORM

[VERB] + s/es in third person

Examples:

- You speak English.
- Do you speak English?
- You do not speak English.

Complete List of Simple Present Forms

USE 1 Repeated Actions

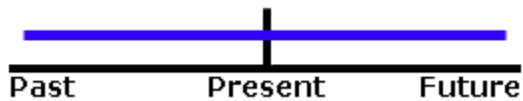


Use the Simple Present to express the idea that an action is repeated or usual. The action can be a habit, a hobby, a daily event, a scheduled event or something that often happens. It can also be something a person often forgets or usually does not do.

Examples:

- I play tennis.
- She does not play tennis.
- Does he play tennis?
- The train leaves every morning at 8 AM.
- The train does not leave at 9 AM.
- When does the train usually leave?
- She always forgets her purse.
- He never forgets his wallet.
- Every twelve months, the Earth circles the Sun.
- Does the Sun circle the Earth?

USE 2 Facts or Generalizations



The Simple Present can also indicate the speaker believes that a fact was true before, is true now, and will be true in the future. It is not important if the speaker is correct about the fact. It is also used to make generalizations about people or things.

Examples:

- Cats like milk.
- Birds do not like milk.
- Do pigs like milk?
- California is in America.
- California is not in the United Kingdom.
- Windows are made of glass.
- Windows are not made of wood.
- New York is a small city. *IT IS NOT IMPORTANT THAT THIS FACT IS UNTRUE.*

USE 3 Scheduled Events in the Near Future



Speakers occasionally use Simple Present to talk about scheduled events in the near future. This is most commonly done when talking about public transportation, but it can be used with other scheduled events as well.

Examples:

- The train leaves tonight at 6 PM.
- The bus does not arrive at 11 AM, it arrives at 11 PM.
- When do we board the plane?
- The party starts at 8 o'clock.
- When does class begin tomorrow?

USE 4 Now (Non-Continuous Verbs)



Speakers sometimes use the Simple Present to express the idea that an action is happening or is not happening now. This can only be done with Non-Continuous Verbs and certain Mixed Verbs.

Examples:

- I am here now.
- She is not here now.
- He needs help right now.
- He does not need help now.
- He has his passport in his hand.
- Do you have your passport with you?

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You only speak English.
- Do you only speak English?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- Once a week, Tom cleans the car. *ACTIVE*
- Once a week, the car is cleaned by Tom. *PASSIVE*

Simple Present Forms

Most Verbs

Most verbs conjugate like the verb "run" below. Notice how you add an "s" to third-person forms. Third-person negative forms and third-person questions are made using "does."

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I run. You run. We run. They run. He runs. She runs. It runs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not run. You do not run. We do not run. They do not run. He does not run. She does not run. It does not run. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do I run? Do you run? Do we run? Do they run? Does he run? Does she run? Does it run?

Instead of "s," "es" is added to positive, third-person forms of verbs ending with the following sounds: s, z, sh, ch, j or zs (as in Zsa Zsa). These special "es"-forms have been marked below with an asterisk*.

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I rush. You rush. We rush. They rush. He rushes. * She rushes. * It rushes. * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not rush. You do not rush. We do not rush. They do not rush. He does not rush. She does not rush. It does not rush. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do I rush? Do you rush? Do we rush? Do they rush? Does he rush? Does she rush? Does it rush?

To Have

The verb "have" is irregular in positive, third-person forms. This irregular form has been marked below with an asterisk*.

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have. You have. We have. They have. He has. * She has. * It has. * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not have. You do not have. We do not have. They do not have. He does not have. She does not have. It does not have. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do I have? Do you have? Do we have? Do they have? Does he have? Does she have? Does it have?

To Be

The verb "be" is irregular in the Simple Present. It also has different question forms and negative forms.

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am. You are. We are. They are. He is. She is. It is. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am not. You are not. We are not. They are not. He is not. She is not. It is not. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Am I? Are you? Are we? Are they? Is he? Is she? Is it?

Modal Verbs

Modal verbs behave differently from other verbs. Notice that they do not take "s" in the third person - there is no difference between first-person, second-person or third-person forms. Like the verb "be" described above, modal verbs also have different question forms and negative forms in Simple Present.

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I should go. • You should go. • We should go. • They should go. • He should go. • She should go. • It should go. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I should not go. • You should not go. • We should not go. • They should not go. • He should not go. • She should not go. • It should not go. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should I go? • Should you go? • Should we go? • Should they go? • Should he go? • Should she go? • Should it go?

Present Continuous

FORM

[am/is/are + present participle]

Examples:

- You are watching TV.
- Are you watching TV?
- You are not watching TV.

Complete List of Present Continuous Forms

USE 1 Now



Use the Present Continuous with Normal Verbs to express the idea that something is happening now, at this very moment. It can also be used to show that something is not happening now.

Examples:

- You are learning English now.
- You are not swimming now.
- Are you sleeping?
- I am sitting.
- I am not standing.
- Is he sitting or standing?
- They are reading their books.
- They are not watching television.
- What are you doing?
- Why aren't you doing your homework?

USE 2 Longer Actions in Progress Now



In English, "now" can mean: this second, today, this month, this year, this century, and so on. Sometimes, we use the Present Continuous to say that we are in the process of doing a longer action which is in progress; however, we might not be doing it at this exact second.

Examples: (All of these sentences can be said while eating dinner in a restaurant.)

- I am studying to become a doctor.
- I am not studying to become a dentist.
- I am reading the book *Tom Sawyer*.
- I am not reading any books right now.
- Are you working on any special projects at work?
- Aren't you teaching at the university now?

USE 3 Near Future

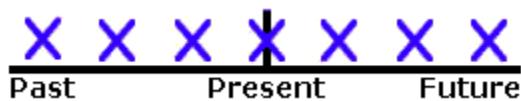


Sometimes, speakers use the Present Continuous to indicate that something will or will not happen in the near future.

Examples:

- I am meeting some friends after work.
- I am not going to the party tonight.
- Is he visiting his parents next weekend?
- Isn't he coming with us tonight?

USE 4 Repetition and Irritation with "Always"



The Present Continuous with words such as "always" or "constantly" expresses the idea that something irritating or shocking often happens. Notice that the meaning is

like Simple Present, but with negative emotion. Remember to put the words "always" or "constantly" between "be" and "verb+ing."

Examples:

- **She is always coming to class late.**
- **He is constantly talking. I wish he would shut up.**
- **I don't like them because they are always complaining.**

REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs/ Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that Non-Continuous Verbs cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for Mixed Verbs cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Present Continuous with these verbs, you must use Simple Present.

Examples:

- **She is loving this chocolate ice cream. *Not Correct***
- **She loves this chocolate ice cream. *Correct***

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- **You are still watching TV.**
- **Are you still watching TV?**

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- **Right now, Tom is writing the letter. *ACTIVE***
- **Right now, the letter is being written by Tom. *PASSIVE***

Present Continuous Forms

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am speaking. • You are speaking. • We are speaking. • They are speaking. • He is speaking. • She is speaking. • It is speaking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not speaking. • You are not speaking. • We are not speaking. • They are not speaking. • He is not speaking. • She is not speaking. • It is not speaking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I speaking? • Are you speaking? • Are we speaking? • Are they speaking? • Is he speaking? • Is she speaking? • Is it speaking?

Simple Past

FORM

[VERB+ed] or irregular verbs

Examples:

- You called Debbie.
- Did you call Debbie?
- You did not call Debbie.

Complete List of Simple Past Forms

USE 1 Completed Action in the Past



Use the Simple Past to express the idea that an action started and finished at a specific time in the past. Sometimes, the speaker may not actually mention the specific time, but they do have one specific time in mind.

Examples:

- I saw a movie yesterday.
- I didn't see a play yesterday.
- Last year, I traveled to Japan.
- Last year, I didn't travel to Korea.
- Did you have dinner last night?
- She washed her car.
- He didn't wash his car.

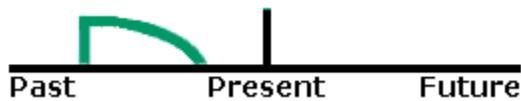
USE 2 A Series of Completed Actions



We use the Simple Past to list a series of completed actions in the past. These actions happen 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and so on.

Examples:

- I finished work, walked to the beach, and found a nice place to swim.
- He arrived from the airport at 8:00, checked into the hotel at 9:00, and met the others at 10:00.
- Did you add flour, pour in the milk, and then add the eggs?

USE 3 Duration in Past

The Simple Past can be used with a duration which starts and stops in the past. A duration is a longer action often indicated by expressions such as: for two years, for five minutes, all day, all year, etc.

Examples:

- I lived in Brazil for two years.
- Shauna studied Japanese for five years.
- They sat at the beach all day.
- They did not stay at the party the entire time.
- We talked on the phone for thirty minutes.
- A: How long did you wait for them?
B: We waited for one hour.

USE 4 Habits in the Past

The Simple Past can also be used to describe a habit which stopped in the past. It can have the same meaning as "used to." To make it clear that we are talking about a habit, we often add expressions such as: always, often, usually, never, when I was a child, when I was younger, etc.

Examples:

- I studied French when I was a child.
- He played the violin.
- He didn't play the piano.
- Did you play a musical instrument when you were a kid?
- She worked at the movie theater after school.
- They never went to school, they always skipped class.

USE 5 Past Facts or Generalizations

The Simple Past can also be used to describe past facts or generalizations which are no longer true. As in USE 4 above, this use of the Simple Past is quite similar to the expression "used to."

Examples:

- She was shy as a child, but now she is very outgoing.
- He didn't like tomatoes before.
- Did you live in Texas when you were a kid?
- People paid much more to make cell phone calls in the past.

IMPORTANT When-Clauses Happen First

Clauses are groups of words which have meaning but are often not complete sentences. Some clauses begin with the word "when" such as "when I dropped my pen..." or "when class began..." These clauses are called when-clauses, and they are very important. The examples below contain when-clauses.

Examples:

- When I paid her one dollar, she answered my question.
- She answered my question when I paid her one dollar.

When-clauses are important because they always happen first when both clauses are in the Simple Past. Both of the examples above mean the same thing: first, I paid her one dollar, and then, she answered my question. It is not important whether "when I paid her one dollar" is at the beginning of the sentence or at the end of the sentence. However, the example below has a different meaning. First, she answered my question, and then, I paid her one dollar.

Example:

- I paid her one dollar when she answered my question.

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You just called Debbie.
- Did you just call Debbie?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE**Examples:**

- Tom repaired the car. *ACTIVE*
- The car was repaired by Tom. *PASSIVE*

Simple Past Forms

Most Verbs

Most verbs conjugate by adding **-ed** like the verb "wait" below.

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I waited. You waited. We waited. They waited. He waited. She waited. It waited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I did not wait. You did not wait. We did not wait. They did not wait. He did not wait. She did not wait. It did not wait. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did I wait? Did you wait? Did we wait? Did they wait? Did he wait? Did she wait? Did it wait?

Irregular Verbs

Many verbs, such as "have," take irregular forms in the Simple Past. Notice that you only use the irregular verbs in statements. In negative forms and questions, "did" indicates Simple Past. To learn more about irregular verbs, visit Englishpage.com's Irregular Verb Dictionary. You can also use Englishpage.com's Online Irregular Verb Flashcards to memorize irregular verb forms.

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I had. You had. We had. They had. He had. She had. It had. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I did not have. You did not have. We did not have. They did not have. He did not have. She did not have. It did not have. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did I have? Did you have? Did we have? Did they have? Did he have? Did she have? Did it have?

To Be

The verb "be" is also irregular in the Simple Past. Unlike other irregular verbs, there are two Simple Past forms: "was" and "were." It also has different question forms and negative forms. Always remember that you DO NOT use "did" with the verb "be" in the Simple Past.

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was. • You were. • We were. • They were. • He was. • She was. • It was. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was not. • You were not. • We were not. • They were not. • He was not. • She was not. • It was not. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was I? • Were you? • Were we? • Were they? • Was he? • Was she? • Was it?

Modal Verbs

Modal verbs behave very strangely in the Simple Past. The most important verb to remember is "must." Notice how it becomes "had to" in the Simple Past.

"Must" becomes "had to":

- I must call my wife now.
- I had to call my wife yesterday.

Past Continuous

FORM

[**was/were + present participle**]

Examples:

- You **were studying** when she called.
- Were you **studying** when she called?
- You **were not studying** when she called.

Complete List of Past Continuous Forms

USE 1 Interrupted Action in the Past



Use the **Past Continuous** to indicate that a longer action in the past was interrupted. The interruption is usually a shorter action in the **Simple Past**. Remember this can be a real interruption or just an interruption in time.

Examples:

- I **was watching TV** when she called.
- When the phone rang, she **was writing a letter**.
- While we **were having** the picnic, it started to rain.
- What **were you doing** when the earthquake started?
- I **was listening** to my iPod, so I didn't hear the fire alarm.
- You **were not listening** to me when I told you to turn the oven off.
- While John **was sleeping** last night, someone stole his car.
- Sammy **was waiting** for us when we got off the plane.
- While I **was writing** the email, the computer suddenly went off.
- A: What **were you doing** when you broke your leg?
B: I **was snowboarding**.

USE 2 Specific Time as an Interruption



In USE 1, described above, the Past Continuous is interrupted by a shorter action in the Simple Past. However, you can also use a specific time as an interruption.

Examples:

- **Last night at 6 PM, I was eating dinner.**
- **At midnight, we were still driving through the desert.**
- **Yesterday at this time, I was sitting at my desk at work.**

IMPORTANT

In the Simple Past, a specific time is used to show when an action began or finished. In the Past Continuous, a specific time only interrupts the action.

Examples:

- **Last night at 6 PM, I ate dinner.**
I STARTED EATING AT 6 PM.
- **Last night at 6 PM, I was eating dinner.**
I STARTED EARLIER; AND AT 6 PM, I WAS IN THE PROCESS OF EATING DINNER.

USE 3 Parallel Actions



When you use the Past Continuous with two actions in the same sentence, it expresses the idea that both actions were happening at the same time. The actions are parallel.

Examples:

- **I was studying while he was making dinner.**
- **While Ellen was reading, Tim was watching television.**
- **Were you listening while he was talking?**
- **I wasn't paying attention while I was writing the letter, so I made several mistakes.**

- **What were you doing while you were waiting?**
- **Thomas wasn't working and I wasn't working either.**
- **They were eating dinner, discussing their plans, and having a good time.**

USE 4 Atmosphere

In English, we often use a series of parallel actions to describe the atmosphere at a particular time in the past.

Example:

- **When I walked into the office, several people were busily typing, some were talking on the phones, the boss was yelling directions, and customers were waiting to be helped. One customer was yelling at a secretary and waving his hands. Others were complaining to each other about the bad service.**

USE 5 Repetition and Irritation with "Always"



The Past Continuous with words such as "always" or "constantly" expresses the idea that something irritating or shocking often happened in the past. The concept is very similar to the expression "used to" but with negative emotion. Remember to put the words "always" or "constantly" between "be" and "verb+ing."

Examples:

- **She was always coming to class late.**
- **He was constantly talking. He annoyed everyone.**
- **I didn't like them because they were always complaining.**

While vs. When

Clauses are groups of words which have meaning, but are often not complete sentences. Some clauses begin with the word "when" such as "when she called" or "when it bit me." Other clauses begin with "while" such as "while she was sleeping" and "while he was surfing." When you talk about things in the past, "when" is most often followed by the verb tense Simple Past, whereas "while" is usually followed by Past Continuous. "While" expresses the idea of "during that time." Study the examples below. They have similar meanings, but they emphasize different parts of the sentence.

Examples:

- I was studying when she called.
- While I was studying, she called.

REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs / Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that Non-Continuous Verbs cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for Mixed Verbs cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Past Continuous with these verbs, you must use Simple Past.

Examples:

- Jane was being at my house when you arrived. **Not Correct**
- Jane was at my house when you arrived. **Correct**

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You were just studying when she called.
- Were you just studying when she called?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE**Examples:**

- The salesman was helping the customer when the thief came into the store. **ACTIVE**
- The customer was being helped by the salesman when the thief came into the store. **PASSIVE**

Past Continuous Forms

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was singing. • You were singing. • We were singing. • They were singing. • He was singing. • She was singing. • It was singing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was not singing. • You were not singing. • We were not singing. • They were not singing. • He was not singing. • She was not singing. • It was not singing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was I singing? • Were you singing? • Were we singing? • Were they singing? • Was he singing? • Was she singing? • Was it singing?

Present Perfect

FORM

[has/have + past participle]

Examples:

- You have seen that movie many times.
- Have you seen that movie many times?
- You have not seen that movie many times.

Complete List of Present Perfect Forms

USE 1 Unspecified Time Before Now



We use the Present Perfect to say that an action happened at an unspecified time before now. The exact time is not important. You CANNOT use the Present Perfect with specific time expressions such as: yesterday, one year ago, last week, when I was a child, when I lived in Japan, at that moment, that day, one day, etc. We CAN use the Present Perfect with unspecific expressions such as: ever, never, once, many times, several times, before, so far, already, yet, etc.

Examples:

- I have seen that movie twenty times.
- I think I have met him once before.
- There have been many earthquakes in California.
- People have traveled to the Moon.
- People have not traveled to Mars.
- Have you read the book yet?
- Nobody has ever climbed that mountain.
- A: Has there ever been a war in the United States?
B: Yes, there has been a war in the United States.

How Do You Actually Use the Present Perfect?

The concept of "unspecified time" can be very confusing to English learners. It is best to associate Present Perfect with the following topics:

TOPIC 1 Experience

You can use the Present Perfect to describe your experience. It is like saying, "I have the experience of..." You can also use this tense to say that you have never had a certain experience. The Present Perfect is NOT used to describe a specific event.

Examples:

- **I have been to France.**

THIS SENTENCE MEANS THAT YOU HAVE HAD THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING IN FRANCE. MAYBE YOU HAVE BEEN THERE ONCE, OR SEVERAL TIMES.

- **I have been to France three times.**

YOU CAN ADD THE NUMBER OF TIMES AT THE END OF THE SENTENCE.

- **I have never been to France.**

THIS SENTENCE MEANS THAT YOU HAVE NOT HAD THE EXPERIENCE OF GOING TO FRANCE.

- **I think I have seen that movie before.**

- **He has never traveled by train.**

- **Joan has studied two foreign languages.**

- **A: Have you ever met him?**

B: No, I have not met him.

TOPIC 2 Change Over Time

We often use the Present Perfect to talk about change that has happened over a period of time.

Examples:

- **You have grown since the last time I saw you.**

- **The government has become more interested in arts education.**

- **Japanese has become one of the most popular courses at the university since the Asian studies program was established.**

- **My English has really improved since I moved to Australia.**

TOPIC 3 Accomplishments

We often use the Present Perfect to list the accomplishments of individuals and humanity. You cannot mention a specific time.

Examples:

- **Man has walked on the Moon.**

- **Our son has learned how to read.**

- Doctors have cured many deadly diseases.
- Scientists have split the atom.

TOPIC 4 An Uncompleted Action You Are Expecting

We often use the Present Perfect to say that an action which we expected has not happened. Using the Present Perfect suggests that we are still waiting for the action to happen.

Examples:

- James has not finished his homework yet.
- Susan hasn't mastered Japanese, but she can communicate.
- Bill has still not arrived.
- The rain hasn't stopped.

TOPIC 5 Multiple Actions at Different Times

We also use the Present Perfect to talk about several different actions which have occurred in the past at different times. Present Perfect suggests the process is not complete and more actions are possible.

Examples:

- The army has attacked that city five times.
- I have had four quizzes and five tests so far this semester.
- We have had many major problems while working on this project.
- She has talked to several specialists about her problem, but nobody knows why she is sick.

Time Expressions with Present Perfect

When we use the Present Perfect it means that something has happened at some point in our lives before now. Remember, the exact time the action happened is not important.



Sometimes, we want to limit the time we are looking in for an experience. We can do this with expressions such as: in the last week, in the last year, this week, this month, so far, up to now, etc.



Examples:

- Have you been to Mexico in the last year?
- I have seen that movie six times in the last month.
- They have had three tests in the last week.
- She graduated from university less than three years ago. She has worked for three different companies so far.
- My car has broken down three times this week.

NOTICE

"Last year" and "in the last year" are very different in meaning. "Last year" means the year before now, and it is considered a specific time which requires Simple Past. "In the last year" means from 365 days ago until now. It is not considered a specific time, so it requires Present Perfect.

Examples:

- I went to Mexico last year.
I WENT TO MEXICO IN THE CALENDAR YEAR BEFORE THIS ONE.
- I have been to Mexico in the last year.
I HAVE BEEN TO MEXICO AT LEAST ONCE AT SOME POINT BETWEEN 365 DAYS AGO AND NOW.

USE 2 Duration From the Past Until Now (Non-Continuous Verbs)



With Non-Continuous Verbs and non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, we use the Present Perfect to show that something started in the past and has continued up until now. "For five minutes," "for two weeks," and "since Tuesday" are all durations which can be used with the Present Perfect.

Examples:

- I have had a cold for two weeks.
- She has been in England for six months.
- Mary has loved chocolate since she was a little girl.

Although the above use of Present Perfect is normally limited to Non-Continuous Verbs and non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, the words "live," "work," "teach," and "study" are sometimes used in this way even though they are NOT Non-Continuous Verbs.

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You have only seen that movie one time.
- Have you only seen that movie one time?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE**Examples:**

- Many tourists have visited that castle. *ACTIVE*
- That castle has been visited by many tourists. *PASSIVE*

Present Perfect Forms

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I have traveled.• You have traveled.• We have traveled.• They have traveled.• He has traveled.• She has traveled.• It has traveled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I have not traveled.• You have not traveled.• We have not traveled.• They have not traveled.• He has not traveled.• She has not traveled.• It has not traveled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have I traveled?• Have you traveled?• Have we traveled?• Have they traveled?• Has he traveled?• Has she traveled?• Has it traveled?

Present Perfect Continuous

FORM

[has/have + been + present participle]

Examples:

- You have been waiting here for two hours.
- Have you been waiting here for two hours?
- You have not been waiting here for two hours.

Complete List of Present Perfect Continuous Forms

USE 1 Duration from the Past Until Now



We use the Present Perfect Continuous to show that something started in the past and has continued up until now. "For five minutes," "for two weeks," and "since Tuesday" are all durations which can be used with the Present Perfect Continuous.

Examples:

- They have been talking for the last hour.
- She has been working at that company for three years.
- What have you been doing for the last 30 minutes?
- James has been teaching at the university since June.
- We have been waiting here for over two hours!
- Why has Nancy not been taking her medicine for the last three days?

USE 2 Recently, Lately



You can also use the Present Perfect Continuous WITHOUT a duration such as "for two weeks." Without the duration, the tense has a more general meaning of "lately." We often use the words "lately" or "recently" to emphasize this meaning.

Examples:

- Recently, I have been feeling really tired.
- She has been watching too much television lately.
- Have you been exercising lately?
- Mary has been feeling a little depressed.
- Lisa has not been practicing her English.
- What have you been doing?

IMPORTANT

Remember that the Present Perfect Continuous has the meaning of "lately" or "recently." If you use the Present Perfect Continuous in a question such as "Have you been feeling alright?", it can suggest that the person looks sick or unhealthy. A question such as "Have you been smoking?" can suggest that you smell the smoke on the person. Using this tense in a question suggests you can see, smell, hear or feel the results of the action. It is possible to insult someone by using this tense incorrectly.

REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs/ Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that Non-Continuous Verbs cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for Mixed Verbs cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Present Perfect Continuous with these verbs, you must use Present Perfect.

Examples:

- Sam has been having his car for two years. **Not Correct**
- Sam has had his car for two years. **Correct**

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You have only been waiting here for one hour.
- Have you only been waiting here for one hour?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- **Recently, John has been doing the work.** *ACTIVE*
- **Recently, the work has been being done by John.** *PASSIVE*

NOTE: Present Perfect Continuous is less commonly used in its passive form.

Present Perfect Continuous Forms

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have been sleeping. • You have been sleeping. • We have been sleeping. • They have been sleeping. • He has been sleeping. • She has been sleeping. • It has been sleeping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not been sleeping. • You have not been sleeping. • We have not been sleeping. • They have not been sleeping. • He has not been sleeping. • She has not been sleeping. • It has not been sleeping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have I been sleeping? • Have you been sleeping? • Have we been sleeping? • Have they been sleeping? • Has he been sleeping? • Has she been sleeping? • Has it been sleeping?

Past Perfect

FORM

[had + past participle]

Examples:

- You had studied English before you moved to New York.
- Had you studied English before you moved to New York?
- You had not studied English before you moved to New York.

Complete List of Past Perfect Forms

USE 1 Completed Action Before Something in the Past

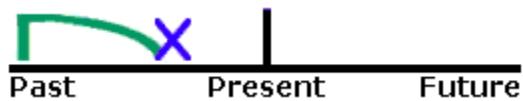


The Past Perfect expresses the idea that something occurred before another action in the past. It can also show that something happened before a specific time in the past.

Examples:

- I had never seen such a beautiful beach before I went to Kauai.
- I did not have any money because I had lost my wallet.
- Tony knew Istanbul so well because he had visited the city several times.
- Had Susan ever studied Thai before she moved to Thailand?
- She only understood the movie because she had read the book.
- Kristine had never been to an opera before last night.
- We were not able to get a hotel room because we had not booked in advance.
- A: Had you ever visited the U.S. before your trip in 2006?
B: Yes, I had been to the U.S. once before.

USE 2 Duration Before Something in the Past (Non-Continuous Verbs)



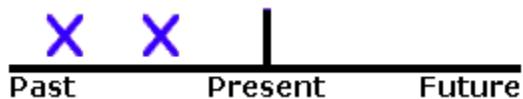
With Non-Continuous Verbs and some non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, we use the Past Perfect to show that something started in the past and continued up until another action in the past.

Examples:

- We had had that car for ten years before it broke down.
- By the time Alex finished his studies, he had been in London for over eight years.
- They felt bad about selling the house because they had owned it for more than forty years.

Although the above use of Past Perfect is normally limited to Non-Continuous Verbs and non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, the words "live," "work," "teach," and "study" are sometimes used in this way even though they are NOT Non-Continuous Verbs.

IMPORTANT Specific Times with the Past Perfect



Unlike with the Present Perfect, it is possible to use specific time words or phrases with the Past Perfect. Although this is possible, it is usually not necessary.

Example:

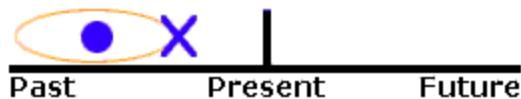
- She had visited her Japanese relatives once in 1993 before she moved in with them in 1996.

MOREOVER

If the Past Perfect action did occur at a specific time, the Simple Past can be used instead of the Past Perfect when "before" or "after" is used in the sentence. The words "before" and "after" actually tell you what happens first, so the Past Perfect is optional. For this reason, both sentences below are correct.

Examples:

- She had visited her Japanese relatives once in 1993 before she moved in with them in 1996.
- She visited her Japanese relatives once in 1993 before she moved in with them in 1996.

HOWEVER

If the Past Perfect is not referring to an action at a specific time, Past Perfect is not optional. Compare the examples below. Here Past Perfect is referring to a lack of experience rather than an action at a specific time. For this reason, Simple Past cannot be used.

Examples:

- She never saw a bear before she moved to Alaska. **Not Correct**
- She had never seen a bear before she moved to Alaska. **Correct**

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You had previously studied English before you moved to New York.
- Had you previously studied English before you moved to New York?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE**Examples:**

- George had repaired many cars before he received his mechanic's license. **ACTIVE**
- Many cars had been repaired by George before he received his mechanic's license. **PASSIVE**

Past Perfect Forms

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I had finished.• You had finished.• We had finished.• They had finished.• He had finished.• She had finished.• It had finished.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I had not finished.• You had not finished.• We had not finished.• They had not finished.• He had not finished.• She had not finished.• It had not finished.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Had I finished?• Had you finished?• Had we finished?• Had they finished?• Had he finished?• Had she finished?• Had it finished?

Past Perfect Continuous

FORM

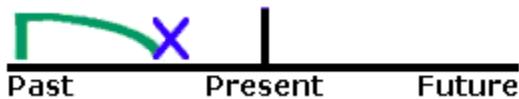
[had been + present participle]

Examples:

- You had been waiting there for more than two hours when she finally arrived.
- Had you been waiting there for more than two hours when she finally arrived?
- You had not been waiting there for more than two hours when she finally arrived.

Complete List of Past Perfect Continuous Forms

USE 1 Duration Before Something in the Past

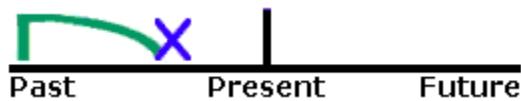


We use the Past Perfect Continuous to show that something started in the past and continued up until another time in the past. "For five minutes" and "for two weeks" are both durations which can be used with the Past Perfect Continuous. Notice that this is related to the Present Perfect Continuous; however, the duration does not continue until now, it stops before something else in the past.

Examples:

- They had been talking for over an hour before Tony arrived.
- She had been working at that company for three years when it went out of business.
- How long had you been waiting to get on the bus?
- Mike wanted to sit down because he had been standing all day at work.
- James had been teaching at the university for more than a year before he left for Asia.
- A: How long had you been studying Turkish before you moved to Ankara?
B: I had not been studying Turkish very long.

USE 2 Cause of Something in the Past



Using the Past Perfect Continuous before another action in the past is a good way to show cause and effect.

Examples:

- Jason was tired because he had been jogging.
- Sam gained weight because he had been overeating.
- Betty failed the final test because she had not been attending class.

Past Continuous vs. Past Perfect Continuous

If you do not include a duration such as "for five minutes," "for two weeks" or "since Friday," many English speakers choose to use the Past Continuous rather than the Past Perfect Continuous. Be careful because this can change the meaning of the sentence. Past Continuous emphasizes interrupted actions, whereas Past Perfect Continuous emphasizes a duration of time before something in the past. Study the examples below to understand the difference.

Examples:

- **He was tired because he was exercising so hard.**
THIS SENTENCE EMPHASIZES THAT HE WAS TIRED BECAUSE HE WAS EXERCISING AT THAT EXACT MOMENT.
- **He was tired because he had been exercising so hard.**
THIS SENTENCE EMPHASIZES THAT HE WAS TIRED BECAUSE HE HAD BEEN EXERCISING OVER A PERIOD OF TIME. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE WAS STILL EXERCISING AT THAT MOMENT OR THAT HE HAD JUST FINISHED.

REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs / Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that Non-Continuous Verbs cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for Mixed Verbs cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Past Perfect Continuous with these verbs, you must use Past Perfect.

Examples:

- The motorcycle had been belonging to George for years before Tina bought it. **Not Correct**
- The motorcycle had belonged to George for years before Tina bought it. **Correct**

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: **always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.**

Examples:

- You had only been waiting there for a few minutes when she arrived.
- Had you only been waiting there for a few minutes when she arrived?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- Chef Jones had been preparing the restaurant's fantastic dinners for two years before he moved to Paris. **ACTIVE**
- The restaurant's fantastic dinners had been being prepared by Chef Jones for two years before he moved to Paris. **PASSIVE**

NOTE: Passive forms of the Past Perfect Continuous are not common.

Past Perfect Continuous Forms

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I had been listening. • You had been listening. • We had been listening. • They had been listening. • He had been listening. • She had been listening. • It had been listening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I had not been listening. • You had not been listening. • We had not been listening. • They had not been listening. • He had not been listening. • She had not been listening. • It had not been listening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Had I been listening? • Had you been listening? • Had we been listening? • Had they been listening? • Had he been listening? • Had she been listening? • Had it been listening?

Simple Future

Simple Future has two different forms in English: "will" and "be going to." Although the two forms can sometimes be used interchangeably, they often express two very different meanings. These different meanings might seem too abstract at first, but with time and practice, the differences will become clear. Both "will" and "be going to" refer to a specific time in the future.



FORM Will

[will + verb]

Examples:

- You will help him later.
- Will you help him later?
- You will not help him later.

FORM Be Going To

[am/is/are + going to + verb]

Examples:

- You are going to meet Jane tonight.
- Are you going to meet Jane tonight?
- You are not going to meet Jane tonight.

Complete List of Simple Future Forms

USE 1 "Will" to Express a Voluntary Action

"Will" often suggests that a speaker will do something voluntarily. A voluntary action is one the speaker offers to do for someone else. Often, we use "will" to respond to someone else's complaint or request for help. We also use "will" when we request that someone help us or volunteer to do something for us. Similarly, we use "will not" or "won't" when we refuse to voluntarily do something.

Examples:

- I will send you the information when I get it.
- I will translate the email, so Mr. Smith can read it.
- Will you help me move this heavy table?
- Will you make dinner?
- I will not do your homework for you.
- I won't do all the housework myself!
- A: I'm really hungry.
B: I'll make some sandwiches.
- A: I'm so tired. I'm about to fall asleep.
B: I'll get you some coffee.
- A: The phone is ringing.
B: I'll get it.

USE 2 "Will" to Express a Promise

"Will" is usually used in promises.

Examples:

- I will call you when I arrive.
- If I am elected President of the United States, I will make sure everyone has access to inexpensive health insurance.
- I promise I will not tell him about the surprise party.
- Don't worry, I'll be careful.
- I won't tell anyone your secret.

USE 3 "Be going to" to Express a Plan

"Be going to" expresses that something is a plan. It expresses the idea that a person intends to do something in the future. It does not matter whether the plan is realistic or not.

Examples:

- He is going to spend his vacation in Hawaii.
- She is not going to spend her vacation in Hawaii.
- A: When are we going to meet each other tonight?
B: We are going to meet at 6 PM.
- I'm going to be an actor when I grow up.
- Michelle is going to begin medical school next year.

- They are going to drive all the way to Alaska.
- Who are you going to invite to the party?
- A: Who is going to make John's birthday cake?
B: Sue is going to make John's birthday cake.

USE 4 "Will" or "Be Going to" to Express a Prediction

Both "will" and "be going to" can express the idea of a general prediction about the future. Predictions are guesses about what might happen in the future. In "prediction" sentences, the subject usually has little control over the future and therefore USES 1-3 do not apply. In the following examples, there is no difference in meaning.

Examples:

- The year 2222 will be a very interesting year.
- The year 2222 is going to be a very interesting year.
- John Smith will be the next President.
- John Smith is going to be the next President.
- The movie "Zenith" will win several Academy Awards.
- The movie "Zenith" is going to win several Academy Awards.

IMPORTANT

In the Simple Future, it is not always clear which USE the speaker has in mind. Often, there is more than one way to interpret a sentence's meaning.

No Future in Time Clauses

Like all future forms, the Simple Future cannot be used in clauses beginning with time expressions such as: when, while, before, after, by the time, as soon as, if, unless, etc. Instead of Simple Future, Simple Present is used.

Examples:

- When you will arrive tonight, we will go out for dinner. **Not Correct**
- When you arrive tonight, we will go out for dinner. **Correct**

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You will never help him.
- Will you ever help him?
- You are never going to meet Jane.
- Are you ever going to meet Jane?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE**Examples:**

- John will finish the work by 5:00 PM. *ACTIVE*
- The work will be finished by 5:00 PM. *PASSIVE*
- Sally is going to make a beautiful dinner tonight. *ACTIVE*
- A beautiful dinner is going to be made by Sally tonight. *PASSIVE*

Simple Future Forms

Using "Will"

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will help. • You will help. • We will help. • They will help. • He will help. • She will help. • It will help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will not help. • You will not help. • We will not help. • They will not help. • He will not help. • She will not help. • It will not help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will I help? • Will you help? • Will we help? • Will they help? • Will he help? • Will she help? • Will it help?

Using "Be Going to"

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am going to leave. • You are going to leave. • We are going to leave. • They are going to leave. • He is going to leave. • She is going to leave. • It is going to leave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not going to leave. • You are not going to leave. • We are not going to leave. • They are not going to leave. • He is not going to leave. • She is not going to leave. • It is not going to leave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I going to leave? • Are you going to leave? • Are we going to leave? • Are they going to leave? • Is he going to leave? • Is she going to leave? • Is it going to leave?

Future Continuous

Future Continuous has two different forms: "will be doing" and "be going to be doing." Unlike Simple Future forms, Future Continuous forms are usually interchangeable.

FORM Future Continuous with "Will"

[will be + present participle]

Examples:

- You will be waiting for her when her plane arrives tonight.
- Will you be waiting for her when her plane arrives tonight?
- You will not be waiting for her when her plane arrives tonight.

FORM Future Continuous with "Be Going To"

[am/is/are + going to be + present participle]

Examples:

- You are going to be waiting for her when her plane arrives tonight.
- Are you going to be waiting for her when her plane arrives tonight?
- You are not going to be waiting for her when her plane arrives tonight.

REMEMBER: It is possible to use either "will" or "be going to" to create the Future Continuous with little difference in meaning.

Complete List of Future Continuous Forms

USE 1 Interrupted Action in the Future



Use the Future Continuous to indicate that a longer action in the future will be interrupted by a shorter action in the future. Remember this can be a real interruption or just an interruption in time.

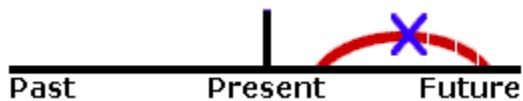
Examples:

- I will be watching TV when she arrives tonight.
- I will be waiting for you when your bus arrives.

- I am going to be staying at the Madison Hotel, if anything *happens* and you *need* to contact me.
- He will be studying at the library tonight, so he will not see Jennifer when she *arrives*.

Notice in the examples above that the interruptions (*marked in italics*) are in Simple Present rather than Simple Future. This is because the interruptions are in time clauses, and you cannot use future tenses in time clauses.

USE 2 Specific Time as an Interruption in the Future



In USE 1, described above, the Future Continuous is interrupted by a short action in the future. In addition to using short actions as interruptions, you can also use a specific time as an interruption.

Examples:

- Tonight at 6 PM, I am going to be eating dinner.
I WILL BE IN THE PROCESS OF EATING DINNER.
- At midnight tonight, we will still be driving through the desert.
WE WILL BE IN THE PROCESS OF DRIVING THROUGH THE DESERT.

REMEMBER

In the Simple Future, a specific time is used to show the time an action will begin or end. In the Future Continuous, a specific time interrupts the action.

Examples:

- Tonight at 6 PM, I am going to eat dinner.
I AM GOING TO START EATING AT 6 PM.
- Tonight at 6 PM, I am going to be eating dinner.
I AM GOING TO START EARLIER AND I WILL BE IN THE PROCESS OF EATING DINNER AT 6 PM.

USE 3 Parallel Actions in the Future



When you use the Future Continuous with two actions in the same sentence, it expresses the idea that both actions will be happening at the same time. The actions are parallel.

Examples:

- I am going to be studying and he is going to be making dinner.
- Tonight, they will be eating dinner, discussing their plans, and having a good time.
- While Ellen *is reading*, Tim will be watching television.

NOTICE "IS READING" BECAUSE OF THE TIME CLAUSE CONTAINING "WHILE." (SEE EXPLANATION BELOW)

USE 4 Atmosphere in the Future

In English, we often use a series of Parallel Actions to describe atmosphere at a specific point in the future.

Example:

- When I arrive at the party, everybody is going to be celebrating. Some will be dancing. Others are going to be talking. A few people will be eating pizza, and several people are going to be drinking beer. They always do the same thing.

REMEMBER No Future in Time Clauses

Like all future tenses, the Future Continuous cannot be used in clauses beginning with time expressions such as: when, while, before, after, by the time, as soon as, if, unless, etc. Instead of Future Continuous, Present Continuous is used.

Examples:

- While I am going to be finishing my homework, she is going to make dinner. **Not Correct**
- While I am finishing my homework, she is going to make dinner. **Correct**

AND REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs / Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that Non-Continuous Verbs cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for Mixed Verbs cannot be

used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Future Continuous with these verbs, you must use Simple Future.

Examples:

- Jane will be being at my house when you arrive. **Not Correct**
- Jane will be at my house when you arrive. **Correct**

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You will still be waiting for her when her plane arrives.
- Will you still be waiting for her when her plane arrives?
- You are still going to be waiting for her when her plane arrives.
- Are you still going to be waiting for her when her plane arrives?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- At 8:00 PM tonight, John will be washing the dishes. **ACTIVE**
- At 8:00 PM tonight, the dishes will be being washed by John. **PASSIVE**
- At 8:00 PM tonight, John is going to be washing the dishes. **ACTIVE**
- At 8:00 PM tonight, the dishes are going to be being washed by John. **PASSIVE**

NOTE: Passive forms of the Future Continuous are not common.

Future Continuous Forms

Using "Will"

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will be waiting. • You will be waiting. • We will be waiting. • They will be waiting. • He will be waiting. • She will be waiting. • It will be waiting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will not be waiting. • You will not be waiting. • We will not be waiting. • They will not be waiting. • He will not be waiting. • She will not be waiting. • It will not be waiting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will I be waiting? • Will you be waiting? • Will we be waiting? • Will they be waiting? • Will he be waiting? • Will she be waiting? • Will it be waiting?

Using "Be Going To"

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am going to be waiting. • You are going to be waiting. • We are going to be waiting. • They are going to be waiting. • He is going to be waiting. • She is going to be waiting. • It is going to be waiting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not going to be waiting. • You are not going to be waiting. • We are not going to be waiting. • They are not going to be waiting. • He is not going to be waiting. • She is not going to be waiting. • It is not going to be waiting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I going to be waiting? • Are you going to be waiting? • Are we going to be waiting? • Are they going to be waiting? • Is he going to be waiting? • Is she going to be waiting? • Is it going to be waiting?

Future Perfect

Future Perfect has two different forms: "will have done" and "be going to have done." Unlike Simple Future forms, Future Perfect forms are usually interchangeable.

FORM Future Perfect with "Will"

[will have + past participle]

Examples:

- You will have perfected your English by the time you come back from the U.S.
- Will you have perfected your English by the time you come back from the U.S.?
- You will not have perfected your English by the time you come back from the U.S.

FORM Future Perfect with "Be Going To"

[am/is/are + going to have + past participle]

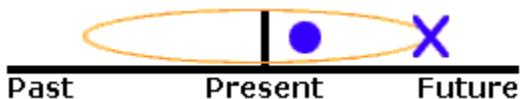
Examples:

- You are going to have perfected your English by the time you come back from the U.S.
- Are you going to have perfected your English by the time you come back from the U.S.?
- You are not going to have perfected your English by the time you come back from the U.S.

NOTE: It is possible to use either "will" or "be going to" to create the Future Perfect with little or no difference in meaning.

Complete List of Future Perfect Forms

USE 1 Completed Action Before Something in the Future



The Future Perfect expresses the idea that something will occur before another action in the future. It can also show that something will happen before a specific time in the future.

Examples:

- By next November, I will have received my promotion.
- By the time he *gets* home, she *is going to have* cleaned the entire house.
- I am not going to have finished this test by 3 o'clock.
- Will she have learned enough Chinese to communicate before she *moves* to Beijing?
- Sam is probably going to have completed the proposal by the time he *leaves* this afternoon.
- By the time I *finish* this course, I will have taken ten tests.
- How many countries are you going to have visited by the time you *turn* 50?

Notice in the examples above that the reference points (*marked in italics*) are in Simple Present rather than Simple Future. This is because the interruptions are in time clauses, and you cannot use future tenses in time clauses.

USE 2 Duration Before Something in the Future (Non-Continuous Verbs)

With Non-Continuous Verbs and some non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, we use the Future Perfect to show that something will continue up until another action in the future.

Examples:

- I will have been in London for six months by the time I leave.
- By Monday, Susan is going to have had my book for a week.

Although the above use of Future Perfect is normally limited to Non-Continuous Verbs and non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, the words "live," "work," "teach," and "study" are sometimes used in this way even though they are NOT Non-Continuous Verbs.

REMEMBER No Future in Time Clauses

Like all future forms, the Future Perfect cannot be used in clauses beginning with time expressions such as: when, while, before, after, by the time, as soon as, if, unless, etc. Instead of Future Perfect, Present Perfect is used.

Examples:

- I am going to see a movie when I will have finished my homework. **Not Correct**
- I am going to see a movie when I have finished my homework. **Correct**

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You will only have learned a few words.
- Will you only have learned a few words?
- You are only going to have learned a few words.
- Are you only going to have learned a few words?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE**Examples:**

- They will have completed the project before the deadline. **ACTIVE**
- The project will have been completed before the deadline. **PASSIVE**
- They are going to have completed the project before the deadline. **ACTIVE**
- The project is going to have been completed before the deadline. **PASSIVE**

Future Perfect Forms

Using "Will"

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will have stopped. • You will have stopped. • We will have stopped. • They will have stopped. • He will have stopped. • She will have stopped. • It will have stopped. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will not have stopped. • You will not have stopped. • We will not have stopped. • They will not have stopped. • He will not have stopped. • She will not have stopped. • It will not have stopped. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will I have stopped? • Will you have stopped? • Will we have stopped? • Will they have stopped? • Will he have stopped? • Will she have stopped? • Will it have stopped?

Using "Be Going To"

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am going to have stopped. You are going to have stopped. We are going to have stopped. They are going to have stopped. He is going to have stopped. She is going to have stopped. It is going to have stopped. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am not going to have stopped. You are not going to have stopped. We are not going to have stopped. They are not going to have stopped. He is not going to have stopped. She is not going to have stopped. It is not going to have stopped. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Am I going to have stopped? Are you going to have stopped? Are we going to have stopped? Are they going to have stopped? Is he going to have stopped? Is she going to have stopped? Is it going to have stopped?

Future Perfect Continuous

Future Perfect Continuous has two different forms: "will have been doing" and "be going to have been doing." Unlike Simple Future forms, Future Perfect Continuous forms are usually interchangeable.

FORM Future Perfect Continuous with "Will"

[will have been + present participle]

Examples:

- You will have been waiting for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives.
- Will you have been waiting for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives?
- You will not have been waiting for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives.

FORM Future Perfect Continuous with "Be Going To"

[am/is/are + going to have been + present participle]

Examples:

- You are going to have been waiting for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives.
- Are you going to have been waiting for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives?
- You are not going to have been waiting for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives.

NOTE: It is possible to use either "will" or "be going to" to create the Future Perfect Continuous with little or no difference in meaning.

Complete List of Future Perfect Continuous Forms

USE 1 Duration Before Something in the Future



We use the Future Perfect Continuous to show that something will continue up until a particular event or time in the future. "For five minutes," "for two weeks," and "since Friday" are all durations which can be used with the Future Perfect Continuous. Notice that this is related to the Present Perfect Continuous and the Past Perfect Continuous; however, with Future Perfect Continuous, the duration stops at or before a reference point in the future.

Examples:

- They will have been talking for over an hour by the time Thomas arrives.
- She is going to have been working at that company for three years when it finally *closes*.
- James will have been teaching at the university for more than a year by the time he *leaves* for Asia.
- How long will you have been studying when you *graduate*?
- We are going to have been driving for over three days straight when we get to Anchorage.
- A: When you *finish* your English course, will you have been living in New Zealand for over a year?
B: No, I will not have been living here that long.

Notice in the examples above that the reference points (*marked in italics*) are in Simple Present rather than Simple Future. This is because these future events are in time clauses, and you cannot use future tenses in time clauses.

USE 2 Cause of Something in the Future



Using the Future Perfect Continuous before another action in the future is a good way to show cause and effect.

Examples:

- Jason will be tired when he gets home because he will have been jogging for over an hour.

- Claudia's English will be perfect when she returns to Germany because she is going to have been studying English in the United States for over two years.

Future Continuous vs. Future Perfect Continuous

If you do not include a duration such as "for five minutes," "for two weeks" or "since Friday," many English speakers choose to use the Future Continuous rather than the Future Perfect Continuous. Be careful because this can change the meaning of the sentence. Future Continuous emphasizes interrupted actions, whereas Future Perfect Continuous emphasizes a duration of time before something in the future. Study the examples below to understand the difference.

Examples:

- **He will be tired because he will be exercising so hard.**

THIS SENTENCE EMPHASIZES THAT HE WILL BE TIRED BECAUSE HE WILL BE EXERCISING AT THAT EXACT MOMENT IN THE FUTURE.

- **He will be tired because he will have been exercising so hard.**

THIS SENTENCE EMPHASIZES THAT HE WILL BE TIRED BECAUSE HE WILL HAVE BEEN EXERCISING FOR A PERIOD OF TIME. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE WILL STILL BE EXERCISING AT THAT MOMENT OR THAT HE WILL JUST HAVE FINISHED.

REMEMBER No Future in Time Clauses

Like all future forms, the Future Perfect Continuous cannot be used in clauses beginning with time expressions such as: when, while, before, after, by the time, as soon as, if, unless, etc. Instead of Future Perfect Continuous, Present Perfect Continuous is used.

Examples:

- You won't get a promotion until you will have been working here as long as Tim. **Not Correct**
- You won't get a promotion until you have been working here as long as Tim. **Correct**

AND REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs / Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that Non-Continuous Verbs cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for Mixed Verbs cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Future Perfect Continuous with these verbs, you must use Future Perfect.

Examples:

- Ned will have been having his driver's license for over two years. **Not Correct**
- Ned will have had his driver's license for over two years. **Correct**

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You will only have been waiting for a few minutes when her plane arrives.
- Will you only have been waiting for a few minutes when her plane arrives?
- You are only going to have been waiting for a few minutes when her plane arrives.
- Are you only going to have been waiting for a few minutes when her plane arrives?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE**Examples:**

- The famous artist will have been painting the mural for over six months by the time it is finished. **ACTIVE**
- The mural will have been being painted by the famous artist for over six months by the time it is finished. **PASSIVE**
- The famous artist is going to have been painting the mural for over six months by the time it is finished. **ACTIVE**
- The mural is going to have been being painted by the famous artist for over six months by the time it is finished. **PASSIVE**

NOTE: Passive forms of the Future Perfect Continuous are not common.

Future Perfect Continuous Forms

Using "Will"

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will have been sleeping. • You will have been sleeping. • We will have been sleeping. • They will have been sleeping. • He will have been sleeping. • She will have been sleeping. • It will have been sleeping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will not have been sleeping. • You will not have been sleeping. • We will not have been sleeping. • They will not have been sleeping. • He will not have been sleeping. • She will not have been sleeping. • It will not have been sleeping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will I have been sleeping? • Will you have been sleeping? • Will we have been sleeping? • Will they have been sleeping? • Will he have been sleeping? • Will she have been sleeping? • Will it have been sleeping?

Using "Be Going To"

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am going to have been sleeping. You are going to have been sleeping. We are going to have been sleeping. They are going to have been sleeping. He is going to have been sleeping. She is going to have been sleeping. It is going to have been sleeping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am not going to have been sleeping. You are not going to have been sleeping. We are not going to have been sleeping. They are not going to have been sleeping. He is not going to have been sleeping. She is not going to have been sleeping. It is not going to have been sleeping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Am I going to have been sleeping? Are you going to have been sleeping? Are we going to have been sleeping? Are they going to have been sleeping? Is he going to have been sleeping? Is she going to have been sleeping? Is it going to have been sleeping?

Used To

FORM

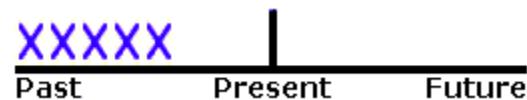
[used to + VERB]

Example:

- I used to go to the beach every day.

It is better not to use "used to" in questions or negative forms; however, this is sometimes done in informal spoken English. It is better to ask questions and create negative sentences using Simple Past.

USE 1 Habit in the Past



"Used to" expresses the idea that something was an old habit that stopped in the past. It indicates that something was often repeated in the past, but it is not usually done now.

Examples:

- Jerry used to study English.
- Sam and Mary used to go to Mexico in the summer.
- I used to start work at 9 o'clock.
- Christine used to eat meat, but now she is a vegetarian.

USE 2 Past Facts and Generalizations



"Used to" can also be used to talk about past facts or generalizations which are no longer true.

Examples:

- I used to live in Paris.
- Sarah used to be fat, but now she is thin.

- **George used to be the best student in class, but now Lena is the best.**
- **Oranges used to cost very little in Florida, but now they are quite expensive.**

"Used to" vs. Simple Past

Both Simple Past and "Used to" can be used to describe past habits, past facts and past generalizations; however, "used to" is preferred when emphasizing these forms of past repetition in positive sentences. On the other hand, when asking questions or making negative sentences, Simple Past is preferred.

Examples:

- **You used to play the piano.**
- **Did you play the piano when you were young?**
- **You did not play the piano when you were young.**

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- **Jerry used to pay the bills. *ACTIVE***
- **The bills used to be paid by Jerry. *PASSIVE***

Would Always

FORM

[would always + VERB]

Examples:

- You would always take your surfboard with you when you went to the beach.
- Would you always take your surfboard with you when you went to the beach?
- You would not always take your surfboard with you when you went to the beach.

USE 1 Habit in the Past



Like "used to" and Simple Past, "would always" expresses the idea that something was an old habit which stopped in the past. It says that an action was often repeated in the past, but it is not usually done now. Unlike "used to" and Simple Past, "would always" suggests that someone willingly acted that way and sometimes expresses annoyance or amusement at the habit. It also often suggests the habit was extreme. To express the opposite idea, we can say "would never" to indicate that someone never did something in the past, but now they do.

Examples:

- She would always send me strange birthday gifts.
- Sam and Mary would always choose the most exotic vacation destinations.
- Sally would not always arrive early to class. She came late once or twice.
- Ned would always show up at our house without calling first.
- Mindy would not always walk to school. Sometimes, she took the bus.
- Christine would always come late to the meetings.
- Jeff would never pay for drinks when we went out together with our friends.

REFUSING TO DO SOMETHING OR NORMALLY NOT DOING SOMETHING IS ALSO A FORM OF HABIT.

REMEMBER "Would Always" is Different

"Would always" is not exactly the same as "used to" or the Simple Past. "Would always" cannot be used to talk about past facts or generalizations. It can only be used for repeated actions.

Examples:

- Sarah was shy, but now she is very outgoing. **Correct**
- Sarah used to be shy, but now she is very outgoing. **Correct**
- Sarah would always be shy, but now she is very outgoing. **Not Correct**

Forms Related to "Would Always"

In addition to "would always," English speakers often use "would constantly," "would often," "would forever" or simply "would." Although the last form "would" is correct, it is not suggested because it can easily be confused with other verb forms such as the Conditional or Future in the Past. Similarly, speakers can use "would rarely," "would occasionally" and "would seldom" to express the idea that an action was not often repeated.

Examples:

- Jerry would come to the parties every weekend.
- Jerry would constantly bring his girlfriend to the parties.
- Jerry would often bring his best friend to the parties.
- Jerry would occasionally bring his older brother to the parties.
- Jerry would seldom bring his sister to the parties.
- Jerry would never bring his younger brother to the parties.

ACTIVE / PASSIVE**Examples:**

- My mother would always make the pies. **ACTIVE**
- The pies would always be made by my mother. **PASSIVE**

Future in the Past

Like Simple Future, Future in the Past has two different forms in English: "would" and "was going to." Although the two forms can sometimes be used interchangeably, they often express two different meanings.

FORM Would

[would + VERB]

Examples:

- I knew you would help him.
- I knew you would not help him.

FORM Was/Were Going To

[was/were + going to + VERB]

Examples:

- I knew you were going to go to the party.
- I knew you were not going to go to the party.

USE 1 Future in Past



Future in the Past is used to express the idea that in the past you thought something would happen in the future. It does not matter if you are correct or not. Future in the Past follows the same basic rules as the Simple Future. "Would" is used to volunteer or promise, and "was going to" is used to plan. Moreover, both forms can be used to make predictions about the future.

Examples:

- I told you he was going to come to the party. *PLAN*
- I knew Julie would make dinner. *VOLUNTARY ACTION*
- Jane said Sam was going to bring his sister with him, but he came alone. *PLAN*
- I had a feeling that the vacation was going to be a disaster. *PREDICTION*
- He promised he would send a postcard from Egypt. *PROMISE*

REMEMBER No Future in Time Clauses

Like all future forms, Future in the Past cannot be used in clauses beginning with time expressions such as: when, while, before, after, by the time, as soon as, if, unless, etc. Instead of using Future in the Past, you must use Simple Past.

Examples:

- I already told Mark that when he would arrive, we would go out for dinner. **Not Correct**
- I already told Mark that when he arrived, we would go out for dinner. **Correct**

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- I knew John would finish the work by 5:00 PM. **ACTIVE**
- I knew the work would be finished by 5:00 PM. **PASSIVE**
- I thought Sally was going to make a beautiful dinner. **ACTIVE**
- I thought a beautiful dinner was going to be made by Sally. **PASSIVE**

Present Conditionals

Present Real Conditional

FORM

[If / When ... Simple Present ..., ... Simple Present ...]

[... Simple Present ... if / when ... Simple Present ...]

USE

The Present Real Conditional is used to talk about what you normally do in real-life situations.

Examples:

- If I go to a friend's house for dinner, I usually take a bottle of wine or some flowers.
- When I have a day off from work, I often go to the beach.
- If the weather is nice, she walks to work.
- Jerry helps me with my homework when he has time.
- I read if there is nothing on TV.
- A: What do you do when it rains?
B: I stay at home.
- A: Where do you stay if you go to Sydney?
B: I stay with my friends near the harbor.

IMPORTANT If / When

Both "if" and "when" are used in the Present Real Conditional. Using "if" suggests that something happens less frequently. Using "when" suggests that something happens regularly.

Examples:

- When I have a day off from work, I usually go to the beach.
I REGULARLY HAVE DAYS OFF FROM WORK.
- If I have a day off from work, I usually go to the beach.
I RARELY HAVE DAYS OFF FROM WORK.

Present Unreal Conditional

FORM

[If ... Simple Past ..., ... would + verb ...]

[... would + verb ... if ... Simple Past ...]

USE

The Present Unreal Conditional is used to talk about what you would generally do in imaginary situations.

Examples:

- If I owned a car, I would drive to work. But I don't own a car.
- She would travel around the world if she had more money. But she doesn't have much money.
- I would read more if I didn't watch so much TV.
- Mary would move to Japan if she spoke Japanese.
- If they worked harder, they would earn more money.
- A: What would you do if you won the lottery?
B: I would buy a house.
- A: Where would you live if you moved to the U.S.?
B: I would live in Seattle.

EXCEPTION If I were ...

In the Present Unreal Conditional, the form "was" is not considered grammatically correct. In written English or in testing situations, you should always use "were." However, in everyday conversation, "was" is often used.

Examples:

- If he were French, he would live in Paris.
- If she were rich, she would buy a yacht.
- I would play basketball if I were taller.
- I would buy that computer if it were cheaper.
- I would buy that computer if it was cheaper. **Not Correct (BUT OFTEN SAID IN CONVERSATION.)**

IMPORTANT Only use "If"

Only the word "if" is used with the Present Unreal Conditional because you are discussing imaginary situations. "When" cannot be used.

Examples:

- I would buy that computer when it were cheaper. **Not Correct**
- I would buy that computer if it were cheaper. **Correct**

EXCEPTION Conditional with Modal Verbs

There are some special conditional forms for modal verbs in English:

would + can = could

would + shall = should

would + may = might

The words "can," "shall" and "may" cannot be used with "would." Instead, they must be used in these special forms.

Examples:

- If I went to Egypt, I would can learn Arabic. **Not Correct**
- If I went to Egypt, I could learn Arabic. **Correct**
- If she had time, she would may go to the party. **Not Correct**
- If she had time, she might go to the party. **Correct**

The words "could," "should," "might" and "ought to" include conditional, so you cannot combine them with "would."

Examples:

- If I had more time, I would could exercise after work. **Not Correct**
- If I had more time, I could exercise after work. **Correct**
- If he invited you, you really would should go. **Not Correct**
- If he invited you, you really should go. **Correct**

Past Conditionals

Past Real Conditional

FORM

[If / When ... Simple Past ..., ... Simple Past ...]

[... Simple Past... if / when ... Simple Past ...]

USE

The Past Real Conditional describes what you used to do in particular real-life situations. It suggests that your habits have changed and you do not usually do these things today.

Examples:

- If I went to a friend's house for dinner, I usually took a bottle of wine or some flowers. I don't do that anymore.
- When I had a day off from work, I often went to the beach. Now, I never get time off.
- If the weather was nice, she often walked to work. Now, she usually drives.
- Jerry always helped me with my homework when he had time. But he doesn't do that anymore.
- A: What did you usually do when it rained?
B: I usually stayed at home.

IMPORTANT Used to

The form "used to" expresses the idea that something was an old habit that stopped in the past. This form is commonly used in Past Real Conditional sentences to emphasize that something was a habit. The examples below have the same meaning as the examples above.

Examples:

- If I went to a friend's house for dinner, I used to take a bottle of wine or some flowers. I don't do that anymore.
- When I had a day off from work, I used to go to the beach. Now, I never get time off.
- If the weather was nice, she used to walk to work. Now, she usually drives.
- Jerry used to help me with my homework when he had time. But he doesn't do that anymore.
- A: What did you usually do when it rained?
B: I used to stay at home.

IMPORTANT If / When

Both "if" and "when" are used in the Past Real Conditional. Using "if" suggests that something happened less frequently. Using "when" suggests that something happened regularly.

Examples:

- **When I had a day off from work, I usually went to the beach.**
I REGULARLY HAD DAYS OFF FROM WORK.
- **If I had a day off from work, I usually went to the beach.**
I RARELY HAD DAYS OFF FROM WORK.

Past Unreal Conditional

FORM

[If ... Past Perfect ..., ... would have + past participle ...]

[... would have + past participle ... if ... Past Perfect ...]

USE

The Past Unreal Conditional is used to talk about imaginary situations in the past. You can describe what you would have done differently or how something could have happened differently if circumstances had been different.

Examples:

- **If I had owned a car, I would have driven to work. But I didn't own one, so I took the bus.**
- **She would have traveled around the world if she had had more money. But she didn't have much money, so she never traveled.**
- **I would have read more as a child if I hadn't watched so much TV. Unfortunately, I did watch a lot of TV, so I never read for entertainment.**
- **Mary would have gotten the job and moved to Japan if she had studied Japanese in school instead of French.**
- **If Jack had worked harder, he would have earned more money. Unfortunately, he was lazy and he didn't earn much.**
- **A: What would you have done if you had won the lottery last week?
B: I would have bought a house.**
- **A: What city would you have chosen if you had decided to move to the United States?
B: I would have chosen Seattle.**

IMPORTANT Only use "If"

Only the word "if" is used with the Past Unreal Conditional because you are discussing imaginary situations. "When" cannot be used.

Examples:

- I would have bought that computer when it had been cheaper. **Not Correct**
- I would have bought that computer if it had been cheaper. **Correct**

EXCEPTION Conditional with Modal Verbs

There are some special conditional forms for modal verbs in English:

would have + can = could have

would have + shall = should have

would have + may = might have

The words "can," "shall" and "may" cannot be used with "would have." Instead, they must be used in these special forms.

Examples:

- If I had gone to Egypt, I could have learned Arabic.
- If she had had time, she might have gone to the party.

The words "could," "should," "might" and "ought to" include Conditional, so you cannot combine them with "would have."

Examples:

- If I had had more time, I could have exercised after work.
- If he had invited you, you might have gone.

Future Conditionals

Future Real Conditional

FORM

[If / When ... Simple Present ..., ... Simple Future ...]

[... Simple Future ... if / when ... Simple Present ...]

Notice that there is no future in the if- or when-clause.

USE

The Future Real Conditional describes what you think you will do in a specific situation in the future. It is different from other Real Conditional forms because, unlike the present or the past, you do not know what will happen in the future. Although this form is called "real", you are usually imagining or guessing about the future. It is called "real" because it is still possible that the action might occur in the future. Carefully study the following examples and compare them to the Future Unreal Conditional examples further down the page.

Examples:

- If I go to my friend's house for dinner tonight, I will take a bottle of wine or some flowers.
I AM STILL NOT SURE IF I WILL GO TO HIS HOUSE OR NOT.
- When I have a day off from work, I am going to go to the beach.
I HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL I HAVE A DAY OFF.
- If the weather is nice, she is going to walk to work.
IT DEPENDS ON THE WEATHER.
- Jerry will help me with my homework when he has time.
I HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL HE HAS TIME.
- I am going to read if there is nothing on TV.
IT DEPENDS ON THE TV SCHEDULE.
- A: What are you going to do if it rains?
B: I am going to stay at home.

IMPORTANT If / When

Both "if" and "when" are used in the Future Real Conditional, but the use is different from other Real Conditional forms. In the Future Real Conditional, "if" suggests that you do not know if something will happen or not. "When" suggests that something will definitely happen at some point; we are simply waiting for it to occur. Notice also that the Simple Future is not used in if-clauses or when-clauses.

Examples:

- **When you call me, I will give you the address.**
YOU ARE GOING TO CALL ME LATER, AND AT THAT TIME, I WILL GIVE YOU THE ADDRESS.
- **If you call me, I will give you the address.**
IF YOU WANT THE ADDRESS, YOU CAN CALL ME.

Future Unreal Conditional**FORM 1 (Most Common Form)**

[If ... Simple Past ..., ... would + verb ...]

[... would + verb ... if ... Simple Past ...]

Notice that this form looks the same as Present Unreal Conditional.

USE

The Future Unreal Conditional is used to talk about imaginary situations in the future. It is not as common as the Future Real Conditional because English speakers often leave open the possibility that anything **MIGHT** happen in the future. It is only used when a speaker needs to emphasize that something is **impossible**. Because this form looks like Present Unreal Conditional, many native speakers prefer Form 2 described below.

Examples:

- **If I had a day off from work next week, I would go to the beach.**
I DON'T HAVE A DAY OFF FROM WORK.
- **I am busy next week. If I had time, I would come to your party.**
I CAN'T COME.
- **Jerry would help me with my homework tomorrow if he didn't have to work.**
HE DOES HAVE TO WORK TOMORROW.

FORM 2

[If ... were + present participle ..., ... would be + present participle ...]

[... would be + present participle ... if ... were + present participle ...]

USE

Form 2 of the Future Unreal Conditional is also used to talk about imaginary situations in the future. Native speakers often prefer this form over Form 1 to emphasize that the conditional form is in the future rather than the present. Also notice in the examples

below that this form can be used in the if-clause, the result, or both parts of the sentence.

Examples:

- If I were going to Fiji next week, I would be taking my scuba diving gear with me. *In if-clause and result*
I AM NOT GOING TO GO TO FIJI AND I AM NOT GOING TO TAKE MY SCUBA GEAR WITH ME.
- If I were not visiting my grandmother tomorrow, I would help you study. *In if-clause*
I AM GOING TO VISIT MY GRANDMOTHER TOMORROW.
- I am busy next week. If I had time, I would be coming to your party. *In result*
I AM NOT GOING TO COME TO YOUR PARTY.

FORM 3

[If ... were going to + verb ..., ... would be + present participle ...]

[... would be + present participle ... if ... were going to + verb ...]

USE

Form 3 of the Future Unreal Conditional is a variation of Form 2 which is also used to talk about imaginary situations in the future. Notice that this form is only different from Form 2 in the if-clause. Native speakers use Form 3 to emphasize that the conditional form is a plan or prediction in the same way "be going to" is used to indicate a plan or prediction.

Examples:

- If I were going to go to Fiji next week, I would be taking my scuba diving gear with me.
I AM NOT GOING TO GO TO FIJI AND I AM NOT GOING TO TAKE MY SCUBA GEAR WITH ME.
- If I were not going to visit my grandmother tomorrow, I would help you study.
I AM GOING TO VISIT MY GRANDMOTHER TOMORROW.

IMPORTANT Only use "If"

Only the word "if" is used with the Past Unreal Conditional because you are discussing imaginary situations. "When" cannot be used.

Examples:

- I would buy that computer tomorrow when it were cheaper. *Not Correct*
- I would buy that computer tomorrow if it were cheaper. *Correct*

EXCEPTION Conditional with Modal Verbs

There are some special conditional forms for modal verbs in English:

would + can = could

would + shall = should

would + may = might

The words "can," "shall" and "may" cannot be used with "would." Instead, they must be used in these special forms.

Examples:

- If I went to Egypt next year, I would can learn Arabic. Unfortunately, that's not possible. **Not Correct**
- If I went to Egypt next year, I could learn Arabic. Unfortunately, that's not possible. **Correct**

The words "could," "should," "might" and "ought to" include conditional, so you cannot combine them with "would."

Examples:

- If I didn't have to work tonight, I would could go to the fitness center. **Not Correct**
- If I didn't have to work tonight, I could go to the fitness center. **Correct**

Future Real Conditional vs. Future Unreal Conditional

To help you understand the difference between the Future Real Conditional and the Future Unreal Conditional, compare the examples below:

Examples:

- If you help me move tomorrow, I will buy you dinner. **Future Real Conditional**
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU CAN HELP ME.
- If you helped me move tomorrow, I would buy you dinner. **Future Unreal Conditional**
YOU CAN'T HELP ME, OR YOU DON'T WANT TO HELP ME.

Continuous Conditionals

Those of you who have studied Englishpage.com's Verb Tense Tutorial should be familiar with continuous verb tenses such as Present Continuous, Past Continuous, Future Continuous, Present Perfect Continuous, Past Perfect Continuous, and Future Perfect Continuous. The Verb Tense Tutorial gives you all the information you need to create continuous Real Conditional sentences. But many English learners are not aware of the fact that we can use continuousness in imaginary situations as well. Study the examples below to learn how to create continuous Unreal Conditional sentences that will make you sound like a native speaker.

Present Unreal Conditional + Continuous

FORM

If-clause: [were + present participle]

Result: [would be + present participle]

USE

Present Unreal Conditional + Continuous is used to discuss imaginary situations which could be happening at this very moment.

Examples in the if-clause:

- If the sun were shining, I would go to the beach.
UNFORTUNATELY, IT IS RAINING SO I CAN'T GO.
- If Sam were sitting here, we would be able to ask him the question ourselves.
BUT SAM IS NOT SITTING HERE. HE IS SOMEWHERE ELSE.
- We would be able to go sailing if the wind were blowing.
BUT THERE IS NO WIND, SO WE CAN'T GO SAILING.

Examples in the result:

- If I were in Hawaii, I would be lying on the beach.
BUT I AM NOT IN HAWAII.
- If my grandfather were here, he would be talking about the war.
BUT HE IS NOT HERE.
- I would be rafting down the Colorado River right now if my leg weren't broken.
BUT MY LEG IS BROKEN, SO I AM NOT THERE.

Past Unreal Conditional + Continuous

FORM

If-clause: [had been + present participle]

Result: [would have been + present participle]

USE

Past Unreal Conditional + Continuous is used to discuss imaginary situations happening at a very specific time in the past or over a period of time in the past.

Examples in the if-clause:

- If I had been talking to him when he said that, I would have punched him in the face.
BUT I WASN'T TALKING TO HIM WHEN HE SAID THAT.
- If he had been standing near the house when the wall collapsed, it would have killed him.
LUCKILY, HE MOVED AWAY BEFORE THE WALL FELL.

Examples in the result:

- If you had gone to his house last night, he would have been sitting on his couch in front of the TV.
BUT YOU DIDN'T GO TO HIS HOUSE, SO YOU DIDN'T SEE WHAT HE WAS DOING.
- If she had missed her train, he would have been waiting for her at the station for hours.
LUCKILY, SHE CAUGHT HER TRAIN AND HE DIDN'T HAVE TO WAIT.

NOTICE that the Past Unreal Conditional + Continuous can be used like the Past Continuous in imaginary situations to emphasize interruptions or parallel actions in the past.

Examples in the if-clause:

- If James had been crossing the street when the car ran the red light, it would have hit him.
- If Tom had been studying while Becky was making dinner, he would have finished his homework early and they could have gone to the movie.

Examples in the result:

- If James hadn't stopped to tie his shoe, he would have been crossing the street when the car ran the red light.
- If you had gone to their house last night, Bob would have been reading the newspaper, Nancy would have been talking on the phone and the kids would have been watching TV. They always do the same things.

NOTICE that Past Unreal Conditional + Continuous can also be used like Present Perfect Continuous or Past Perfect Continuous in imaginary situations to emphasize a duration of time.

Examples in the if-clause:

- Scott said he had been studying Greek for more than five years. If he had been studying the language that long, I think he would have been able to interpret for us at the airport.
- Sarah claimed she had been waiting in the rain for more than twenty minutes by the time we arrived, but she wasn't even wet. If she had been waiting that long, I think she would have been totally drenched by the time we arrived.

Examples in the result:

- Terry's plane arrived ahead of schedule. If I hadn't decided to go to the airport early, she would have been waiting there for more than twenty minutes before I arrived.
- At the travel agency yesterday, I waited for more than an hour for somebody to help me. Finally, I got up and left. If I hadn't decided to leave, I would have been sitting there forever.

Future Unreal Conditional + Continuous

FORM

If-clause: [were + present participle]

Result: [would be + present participle]

USE

Future Unreal Conditional + Continuous can be used like the Future Continuous in imaginary situations to emphasize interruptions or parallel actions in the future.

NOTICE The future form looks the same as the present form. The future is indicated with words such as "tomorrow," "next week" or "in a couple of days."

Examples in the if-clause:

- If I were waiting there next week when he gets off the plane, he would be totally surprised.
BUT I WILL NOT BE WAITING THERE, SO HE WON'T BE SURPRISED.
- If he were staying in that hotel next week while the conference is being held, he might be able to meet some of the key speakers and tell them about our new product.
I DON'T THINK HE WILL BE ABLE TO STAY AT THE HOTEL, SO HE WON'T BE ABLE TO MEET ANYBODY THERE.

Examples in the result:

- If I were able to go to the train station tonight to meet Sandra, I would be standing on the platform waiting for her when she arrives.
I WON'T BE ABLE TO GO TO THE TRAIN STATION, SO I WILL NOT BE STANDING THERE WHEN SHE ARRIVES.
- If you went over to Paul's house after work, he would probably be sitting there at his computer surfing the Internet.
BUT YOU WON'T GO OVER.

Mixed Conditionals

Those of you who have been following the Conditional Tutorial should now be familiar with present, past and future conditional verb forms. Sometimes Unreal Conditional sentences are mixed. This means that the time in the if-clause is not the same as the time in the result. Study the examples below to learn how to mix conditional verb forms like a native speaker.

Verbs in green are in the Present Unreal Conditional.

Verbs in red are in the Past Unreal Conditional.

Verbs in purple are in the Future Unreal Conditional.

Mixed Conditional Patterns

PAST	PRESENT
------	---------

Examples:

- If I **had won** the lottery, I **would be** rich.
BUT I DIDN'T WIN THE LOTTERY IN THE PAST AND I AM NOT RICH NOW.
- If I **had taken** French in high school, I **would have** more job opportunities.
BUT I DIDN'T TAKE FRENCH IN HIGH SCHOOL AND I DON'T HAVE MANY JOB OPPORTUNITIES.
- If she **had been born** in the United States, she **wouldn't need** a visa to work here.
BUT SHE WASN'T BORN IN THE UNITED STATES AND SHE DOES NEED A VISA NOW TO WORK HERE.

PAST	FUTURE
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Examples:

- If she **had signed** up for the ski trip last week, she **would be joining** us tomorrow.
BUT SHE DIDN'T SIGN UP FOR THE SKI TRIP LAST WEEK AND SHE ISN'T GOING TO JOIN US TOMORROW.
- If Mark **had gotten** the job instead of Joe, he **would be moving** to Shanghai.
BUT MARK DIDN'T GET THE JOB AND MARK IS NOT GOING TO MOVE TO SHANGHAI.

- If Darren **hadn't wasted** his Christmas bonus gambling in Las Vegas, he **would go to Mexico with us next month.**

BUT DARREN WASTED HIS CHRISTMAS BONUS GAMBLING IN LAS VEGAS AND HE WON'T GO TO MEXICO WITH US NEXT MONTH.

PRESENT

PAST

Examples:

- If I **were** rich, I **would have bought** that Ferrari we saw yesterday.
BUT I AM NOT CURRENTLY RICH AND THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T BUY THE FERRARI YESTERDAY.
- If Sam **spoke** Russian, he **would have translated** the letter for you.
BUT SAM DOESN'T SPEAK RUSSIAN AND THAT IS WHY HE DIDN'T TRANSLATE THE LETTER.
- If I **didn't have to work** so much, I **would have gone** to the party last night.
BUT I HAVE TO WORK A LOT AND THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T GO TO THE PARTY LAST NIGHT.

PRESENT

FUTURE

Examples:

- If I **didn't have** so much vacation time, I **wouldn't go** with you on the cruise to Alaska next week.
BUT I DO HAVE A LOT OF VACATION TIME AND I WILL GO ON THE TRIP NEXT WEEK.
- If Cindy **were** more creative, the company **would send** her to New York to work on the new advertising campaign.
BUT CINDY IS NOT CREATIVE AND THE COMPANY WON'T SEND HER TO NEW YORK TO WORK ON THE NEW CAMPAIGN.
- If Dan **weren't** so nice, he **wouldn't be** tutoring you in math tonight.
BUT DAN IS NICE AND HE IS GOING TO TUTOR YOU TONIGHT.

FUTURE

PAST

Examples:

- If I **weren't going** on my business trip next week, I **would have accepted** that new assignment at work.
BUT I AM GOING TO GO ON A BUSINESS TRIP NEXT WEEK, AND THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T ACCEPT THAT NEW ASSIGNMENT AT WORK.
- If my parents **weren't coming** this weekend, I **would have planned** a nice trip just for the two of us to Napa Valley.
BUT MY PARENTS ARE GOING TO COME THIS WEEKEND, AND THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T PLAN A TRIP FOR THE TWO OF US TO NAPA VALLEY.
- If Donna **weren't making** us a big dinner tonight, I **would have suggested** that we go to that nice Italian restaurant.
BUT SHE IS GOING TO MAKE US A BIG DINNER TONIGHT, AND THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T SUGGEST THAT WE GO TO THAT NICE ITALIAN RESTAURANT.

FUTURE

PRESENT

Examples:

- If I **were** going to that concert tonight, I **would** be very excited.
BUT I AM NOT GOING TO GO TO THAT CONCERT TONIGHT AND THAT IS WHY I AM NOT EXCITED.
- If Sandy **were** giving a speech tomorrow, she **would** be very nervous.
BUT SANDY IS NOT GOING TO GIVE A SPEECH TOMORROW AND THAT IS WHY SHE IS NOT NERVOUS.
- If Seb **didn't** come with us to the desert, everyone **would** be very disappointed.
BUT SEB WILL COME WITH US TO THE DESERT AND THAT IS WHY EVERYONE IS SO HAPPY.

Were To

"Were to" in the Present

FORM

[If ... were to + verb ..., ...]

USE

"Were to" can be used in the present to emphasize that the conditional form is extremely unlikely or unthinkably horrible. Notice that this special form is only used in the if-clause.

Examples:

- If she were to be rich, she would be horribly obnoxious.
IT IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT SHE WOULD BE RICH.
- If I were to have no friends, who would I spend my time with?
HAVING NO FRIENDS IS A HORRIBLE THOUGHT.
- If Nathan were to be my boss, this job would be intolerable.
NATHAN'S BEING MY BOSS IS A HORRIBLE CONCEPT.

"Were to" in the Future

FORM

[If ... were to + verb ..., ...]

USE

"Were to" can be used in the future to emphasize that the conditional form is extremely unlikely or unthinkably horrible. Notice that this special form is only used in the if-clause.

Examples:

- If I were to lose my job next year, I would probably not find a new one quickly.
LOSING MY JOB WOULD BE TERRIBLE.
- If he were to fail his driving test tomorrow, he would have to take it again.
HE IS NOT LIKELY TO FAIL HIS DRIVING TEST.
- If Sarah were to show up late to the birthday party, it would ruin the surprise.
SARAH WILL SURELY COME ON TIME.

"Were to" in the Past

FORM

[If ... were to have + past participle ..., ...]

USE

"Were to" can be used in the past to emphasize that the conditional form is extremely unlikely or unthinkably horrible. Notice that this special form is only used in the if-clause.

Examples:

- If the fire were to have destroyed the building, it would have been a tragic cultural loss.
THE THOUGHT OF SUCH A LOSS IS TOO HORRIBLE TO CONSIDER.
- If the dam were to have burst, the entire town would have been destroyed.
SUCH DESTRUCTION IS TOO HORRIBLE TO CONSIDER.
- If Sarah were to have failed the final test, she would have lost her scholarship.
SHE IS AN EXCELLENT STUDENT, AND IT IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT SHE WOULD HAVE FAILED THE TEST.

Can

"Can" is one of the most commonly used modal verbs in English. It can be used to express ability or opportunity, to request or offer permission, and to show possibility or impossibility.

Examples:

- I can ride a horse. *ABILITY*
- We can stay with my brother when we are in Paris. *OPPORTUNITY*
- She cannot stay out after 10 PM. *PERMISSION*
- Can you hand me the stapler? *REQUEST*
- Any child can grow up to be president. *POSSIBILITY*

Using "Can" in Present, Past, and Future

Most modal verbs behave quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the chart below to learn how "can" behaves in different contexts.

Modal Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
can <i>GENERAL ABILITY</i>	<p>1. I can speak Chinese.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "COULD" I could speak Chinese when I was a kid.</p> <p>3. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" I will be able to speak Chinese by the time I finish my course.</p>	<p>1. I can't speak Swahili.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "COULD" I couldn't speak Swahili.</p> <p>3. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" I won't be able to speak Swahili.</p>	be able to

<p>can <i>ABILITY DURING A SPECIFIC EVENT</i></p>	<p>1. With a burst of adrenaline, people can pick up cars.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" With a sudden burst of adrenaline, he was able to lift the car off the child's leg.</p> <p>3. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" With a sudden burst of adrenaline, he will be able to lift the car.</p>	<p>1. Even with a burst of adrenaline, people can't pick up something that heavy.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" Even the weight lifter, wasn't able to lift the car off the child's leg.</p> <p>3. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" Even three men working together won't be able to lift the car.</p>	<p>be able to</p>
<p>can <i>OPPORTUNITY</i></p>	<p>1. I have some free time. I can help her now.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" I had some free time yesterday. I was able to help her at that time.</p> <p>3. I'll have some free time tomorrow. I can help her then.</p>	<p>1. I don't have any time. I can't help her now.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" I didn't have time yesterday. I wasn't able to help her at that time.</p> <p>3. I won't have any time later. I can't help her then.</p>	<p>be able to</p>
<p>can <i>PERMISSION</i></p>	<p>1. I can drive Susan's car when she is out of town.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "BE ALLOWED TO " I was allowed to drive Susan's car while she was out of town last week.</p> <p>3. I can drive Susan's car while she is out of town next week.</p>	<p>1. I can't drive Susan's car when she is out of town.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "BE ALLOWED TO " I wasn't allowed to drive Susan's car while she was out of town last week.</p> <p>3. I can't drive Susan's car while she is out of town next week.</p>	<p>may</p>

can <i>REQUEST</i>	<p>Can I have a glass of water?</p> <p>Can you give me a lift to school?</p> <p><i>REQUESTS USUALLY REFER TO THE NEAR FUTURE.</i></p>	<p>Can't I have a glass of water?</p> <p>Can't you give me a lift to school?</p> <p><i>REQUESTS USUALLY REFER TO THE NEAR FUTURE.</i></p>	could, may
can <i>POSSIBILITY, IMPOSSIBILITY</i>	<p>Anyone can become rich and famous if they know the right people.</p> <p>Learning a language can be a real challenge.</p> <p><i>THIS USE IS USUALLY A GENERALIZATION OR A SUPPOSITION.</i></p>	<p>It can't cost more than a dollar or two.</p> <p>You can't be 45! I thought you were about 18 years old.</p> <p><i>THIS USE IS USUALLY A GENERALIZATION OR A SUPPOSITION.</i></p>	could

Could

"Could" is used to express possibility or past ability as well as to make suggestions and requests. "Could" is also commonly used in conditional sentences as the conditional form of "can."

Examples:

- Extreme rain could cause the river to flood the city. *POSSIBILITY*
- Nancy could ski like a pro by the age of 11. *PAST ABILITY*
- You could see a movie or go out to dinner. *SUGGESTION*
- Could I use your computer to email my boss? *REQUEST*
- We could go on the trip if I didn't have to work this weekend. *CONDITIONAL*

Using "Could" in Present, Past, and Future

Most modal verbs behave quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the chart below to learn how "could" behaves in different contexts.

Modal Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
could <i>POSSIBILITY</i>	<p>1. John could be the one who stole the money.</p> <p>2. John could have been the one who stole the money.</p> <p>3. John could go to jail for stealing the money.</p>	<p>1. Mary couldn't be the one who stole the money.</p> <p>2. Mary couldn't have been the one who stole the money.</p> <p>3. Mary couldn't possibly go to jail for the crime.</p>	might, may
could <i>CONDITIONAL OF CAN</i>	<p>1. If I had more time, I could travel around the world.</p> <p>2. If I had had more time, I could have traveled around the world.</p> <p>3. If I had more time this winter, I could travel around the world.</p>	<p>1. Even if I had more time, I couldn't travel around the world.</p> <p>2. Even if I had had more time, I couldn't have traveled around the world.</p> <p>3. Even if I had more time this winter, I couldn't travel around the world.</p>	

could <i>SUGGESTION</i>	1. NO PRESENT FORM 2. You could have spent your vacation in Hawaii. 3. You could spend your vacation in Hawaii.	NO NEGATIVE FORMS	
could <i>PAST ABILITY</i>	<p>I could run ten miles in my twenties.</p> <p>I could speak Chinese when I was a kid.</p> <p>"COULD" CANNOT BE USED IN POSITIVE SENTENCES IN WHICH YOU DESCRIBE A MOMENTARY OR ONE-TIME ABILITY.</p> <p>Yesterday, I could lift the couch by myself. Not Correct</p>	<p>I couldn't run more than a mile in my twenties.</p> <p>I couldn't speak Swahili.</p> <p>"COULD" CAN BE USED IN NEGATIVE SENTENCES IN WHICH YOU DESCRIBE A MOMENTARY OR ONE-TIME ABILITY.</p> <p>Yesterday, I couldn't lift the couch by myself. Correct</p>	be able to

could <i>POLITE REQUEST</i>	<p>Could I have something to drink?</p> <p>Could I borrow your stapler?</p> <p>REQUESTS USUALLY REFER TO THE NEAR FUTURE.</p>	<p>Couldn't he come with us?</p> <p>Couldn't you help me with this for just a second?</p> <p>REQUESTS USUALLY REFER TO THE NEAR FUTURE.</p>	can, may, might
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REMEMBER: "Could not" vs. "Might not"

"Could not" suggests that it is impossible for something to happen. "Might not" suggests you do not know if something happens.

Examples:

- **Jack might not have the key.** *MAYBE HE DOES NOT HAVE THE KEY.*
- **Jack could not have the key.** *IT IS IMPOSSIBLE THAT HE HAS THE KEY.*

Had Better

"Had better" is most commonly used to make recommendations. It can also be used to express desperate hope as well as warn people.

Examples:

- You had better take your umbrella with you today. *RECOMMENDATION*
- That bus had better get here soon! *DESPERATE HOPE*
- You had better watch the way you talk to me in the future! *WARNING*

Using "Had Better" in Present, Past, and Future

Most modal verbs behave quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the chart below to learn how "had better" behaves in different contexts.

Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
had better <i>RECOMMENDATION</i>	<p>1. SHIFT TO "SHOULD" OR "OUGHT TO" People should unplug toasters before they clean them.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "SHOULD HAVE" OR "OUGHT TO HAVE" You should have unplugged the toaster before you tried to clean it.</p> <p>3. You had better unplug the toaster before you try to clean it.</p>	<p>1. SHIFT TO "SHOULD" OR "OUGHT TO" People shouldn't clean toasters without unplugging them first.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "SHOULD HAVE" OR "OUGHT TO HAVE" You shouldn't have cleaned the toaster without unplugging it first.</p> <p>3. You had better not clean the toaster until you unplug it.</p>	should, ought to

<p>had better <i>DESPERATE HOPE, WARNING</i></p>	<p>The movie had better end soon. They had better be here before we start dinner. <i>DESPERATE HOPES AND WARNINGS USUALLY REFER TO THE NEAR FUTURE.</i></p>	<p>They had better not be late. They had better not forget Tom's birthday gift. <i>DESPERATE HOPES AND WARNINGS USUALLY REFER TO THE NEAR FUTURE.</i></p>	
<p>"Had better" is often simply pronounced as "better" in spoken English.</p>			

Have To

"Have to" is used to express certainty, necessity, and obligation.

Examples:

- This answer has to be correct. *CERTAINTY*
- The soup has to be stirred continuously to prevent burning. *NECESSITY*
- They have to leave early. *OBLIGATION*

Using "Have to" in Present, Past, and Future

"Have to" behaves quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the chart below to learn how "have to" behaves in different contexts.

Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
have to <i>CERTAINTY</i>	<p>1. That has to be Jerry. They said he was tall with bright red hair.</p> <p>2. That has to have been the right restaurant. There were no other restaurants on the street.</p> <p>3. NONE</p>	<p>1. SHIFT TO "MUST" That must not be Jerry. They said he has blond hair, not red hair.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "MUST" That must not have been the right restaurant. I guess there was another one around there somewhere.</p> <p>3. NONE</p>	must, have got to

have to <i>NECESSITY</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. She has to read four books for this literature class. 2. She had to finish the first book before the midterm. 3. She will have to finish the other books before the final exam. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. She doesn't have to read "Grapes of Wrath." It's optional reading for extra credit. 2. She didn't have to write a critique of "The Scarlet Letter." She had to give a presentation to her class. 3. She won't have to take any other literature classes. American Literature 101 is the only required course. 	must
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REMEMBER: "Do not have to" vs. "Must not"

"Do not have to" suggests that someone is not required to do something. "Must not" suggests that you are prohibited from doing something.

Examples:

- **You must not eat that.** *IT IS FORBIDDEN, IT IS NOT ALLOWED.*
- **You don't have to eat that.** *YOU CAN IF YOU WANT TO, BUT IT IS NOT NECESSARY.*

Have Got To

"Have got to" is used to express necessity and obligation.

Examples:

- Drivers **have got to** get a license to drive a car in the US. **NECESSITY**
- I **have got to** be at work by 8:30 AM. **OBLIGATION**

Using "Have Got to" in Present, Past, and Future

Most modal verbs behave quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the chart below to learn how "have got to" behaves in different contexts.

Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
have got to <i>NECESSITY</i>	<p>1. People have got to be on time if they want to get a seat in the crowded theater.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "HAVE TO" You had to be on time if you wanted to get a seat in the crowded theater.</p> <p>3. You have got to be there on time tonight if you want to get a seat in the crowded theater.</p>	<p>1. SHIFT TO "HAVE TO" People don't have to be there on time to get a seat.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "HAVE TO" You didn't have to be there on time to get a seat.</p> <p>3. SHIFT TO "HAVE TO" You won't have to be there on time to get a seat.</p>	have to, must
haven't got to <i>FUTURE OBLIGATION</i>		<p>Haven't you got to be there by 7:00?</p> <p>Haven't you got to finish that project today?</p> <p>"HAVEN'T GOT TO" IS PRIMARILY USED TO ASK ABOUT FUTURE OBLIGATIONS. IT CAN BE USED IN STATEMENTS, BUT THIS IS LESS COMMON.</p>	Don't you have to

May

"May" is most commonly used to express possibility. It can also be used to give or request permission, although this usage is becoming less common.

Examples:

- Cheryl may be at home, or perhaps at work. *POSSIBILITY*
- Johnny, you may leave the table when you have finished your dinner. *GIVE PERMISSION*
- May I use your bathroom? *REQUEST PERMISSION*

Using "May" in Present, Past, and Future

Most modal verbs behave quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the chart below to learn how "may" behaves in different contexts.

Modal Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
may <i>POSSIBILITY</i>	<p>1. Jack may be upset. I can't really tell if he is annoyed or tired.</p> <p>2. Jack may have been upset. I couldn't really tell if he was annoyed or tired.</p> <p>3. Jack may get upset if you don't tell him the truth.</p>	<p>1. Jack may not be upset. Perhaps he is tired.</p> <p>2. Jack may not have been upset. Perhaps he was tired.</p> <p>3. Jack may not get upset, even if you tell him the truth</p>	might

<p>may <i>GIVE PERMISSION</i></p>	<p>1. You may leave the table now that you're finished with your dinner.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "BE ALLOWED TO" You were allowed to leave the table after you finished your dinner.</p> <p>3. You may leave the table when you finish your dinner.</p>	<p>1. You may not leave the table. You're not finished with your dinner yet.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "BE ALLOWED TO" You were not allowed to leave the table because you hadn't finished your dinner.</p> <p>3. You may not leave the table until you are finished with your dinner.</p>	<p>can</p>
<p>may <i>REQUEST PERMISSION</i></p>	<p>May I borrow your eraser? May I make a phone call? <i>REQUESTS USUALLY REFER TO THE NEAR FUTURE.</i></p>	<p>NO NEGATIVE FORMS</p>	<p>can, might</p>

Might

"Might" is most commonly used to express possibility. It is also often used in conditional sentences. English speakers can also use "might" to make suggestions or requests, although this is less common in American English.

Examples:

- Your purse might be in the living room. *POSSIBILITY*
- If I didn't have to work, I might go with you. *CONDITIONAL*
- You might visit the botanical gardens during your visit. *SUGGESTION*
- Might I borrow your pen? *REQUEST*

Using "Might" in Present, Past, and Future

Most modal verbs behave quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the chart below to learn how "might" behaves in different contexts.

Modal Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
might <i>POSSIBILITY</i>	<p>1. She might be on the bus. I think her car is having problems.</p> <p>2. She might have taken the bus. I'm not sure how she got to work.</p> <p>3. She might take the bus to get home. I don't think Bill will be able to give her a ride.</p>	<p>1. She might not be on the bus. She might be walking home.</p> <p>2. She might not have taken the bus. She might have walked home.</p> <p>3. She might not take the bus. She might get a ride from Bill.</p>	could, may

might <i>CONDITIONAL OF MAY</i>	<p>1. If I entered the contest, I might actually win.</p> <p>2. If I had entered the contest, I might actually have won.</p> <p>3. If I entered the contest tomorrow, I might actually win. Unfortunately, I can't enter it.</p>	<p>1. Even if I entered the contest, I might not win.</p> <p>2. Even if I had entered the contest, I might not have won.</p> <p>3. Even if I entered the contest tomorrow, I might not win.</p>	
might <i>SUGGESTION</i>	<p>1. NO PRESENT FORM</p> <p>2. You might have tried the cheese cake.</p> <p>3. You might try the cheesecake.</p>	<p>1. NO PRESENT FORM</p> <p>2. PAST FORM UNCOMMON</p> <p>3. You might not want to eat the cheese cake. It's very calorific.</p>	could
might <i>REQUEST</i> <i>(British form)</i>	<p>Might I have something to drink?</p> <p>Might I borrow the stapler?</p> <p><i>REQUESTS USUALLY REFER TO THE NEAR FUTURE.</i></p>	NEGATIVE FORMS UNCOMMON	could, may, can
<p>REMEMBER: "Might not" vs. "Could not"</p> <p>"Might not" suggests you do not know if something happens. "Could not" suggests that it is impossible for something to happen.</p>			
<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack might not have the key. <i>MAYBE HE DOES NOT HAVE THE KEY.</i> • Jack could not have the key. <i>IT IS IMPOSSIBLE THAT HE HAS THE KEY.</i> 			

Must

"Must" is most commonly used to express certainty. It can also be used to express necessity or strong recommendation, although native speakers prefer the more flexible form "have to." "Must not" can be used to prohibit actions, but this sounds very severe; speakers prefer to use softer modal verbs such as "should not" or "ought not" to dissuade rather than prohibit.

Examples:

- **This must be the right address!** *CERTAINTY*
- **Students must pass an entrance examination to study at this school.** *NECESSITY*
- **You must take some medicine for that cough.** *STRONG RECOMMENDATION*
- **Jenny, you must not play in the street!** *PROHIBITION*

Using "Must" in Present, Past, and Future

Most modal verbs behave quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the chart below to learn how "must" behaves in different contexts.

Modal Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
must <i>CERTAINTY</i>	<p>1. That must be Jerry. They said he was tall with bright red hair.</p> <p>2. That must have been the right restaurant. There are no other restaurants on this street.</p> <p>3. NO FUTURE FORM</p>	<p>1. That must not be Jerry. He is supposed to have red hair.</p> <p>2. That must not have been the right restaurant. I guess there is another one around here somewhere.</p> <p>3. NO FUTURE FORM</p>	have to

must not <i>PROHIBITION</i>		<p>You must not swim in that river. It's full of crocodiles.</p> <p>You must not forget to take your malaria medication while you are in the tropics.</p> <p><i>PROHIBITION USUALLY REFER TO THE NEAR FUTURE.</i></p>	
must <i>STRONG RECOMMENDATION</i> <i>(Americans prefer the form "should.")</i>	<p>1. You must take some time off and get some rest.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "SHOULD" You should have taken some time off last week to get some rest.</p> <p>3. SHIFT TO "SHOULD" You should take some time off next week to get some rest.</p>	<p>1. You mustn't drink so much. It's not good for your health.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "SHOULD" You shouldn't have drunk so much. That caused the accident.</p> <p>3. SHIFT TO "SHOULD" You shouldn't drink at the party. You are going to be the designated driver.</p>	should
must <i>NECESSITY</i> <i>(Americans prefer the form "have to.")</i>	<p>1. You must have a permit to enter the national park.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "HAVE TO" We had to have a permit to enter the park.</p> <p>3. We must get a permit to enter the park next week.</p>	<p>1. SHIFT TO "HAVE TO" We don't have to get a permit to enter the national park.</p> <p>2. SHIFT TO "HAVE TO" We didn't have to get a permit to enter the national park.</p> <p>3. SHIFT TO "HAVE TO" We won't have to get a permit to enter the national park.</p>	have to

REMEMBER: "Must not" vs. "Do not have to"

"Must not" suggests that you are prohibited from doing something. "Do not have to" suggests that someone is not required to do something.

Examples:

- **You must not eat that.** *IT IS FORBIDDEN, IT IS NOT ALLOWED.*
- **You don't have to eat that.** *YOU CAN IF YOU WANT TO, BUT IT IS NOT NECESSARY.*

Ought To

"Ought to" is used to advise or make recommendations. "Ought to" also expresses assumption or expectation as well as strong probability, often with the idea that something is deserved. "Ought not" (without "to") is used to advise against doing something, although Americans prefer the less formal forms "should not" or "had better not."

Examples:

- You ought to stop smoking. *RECOMMENDATION*
- Jim ought to get the promotion. *IT IS EXPECTED BECAUSE HE DESERVES IT.*
- This stock ought to increase in value. *PROBABILITY*
- Mark ought not drink so much. *ADVICE AGAINST SOMETHING (NOTICE THERE IS NO "TO")*

Using "Ought to" in Present, Past, and Future

Most modal verbs behave quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the chart below to learn how "ought to" behaves in different contexts.

Modal Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
ought to <i>RECOMMENDATION, ADVICE</i>	<p>1. Margaret ought to exercise more.</p> <p>2. Margaret ought to have exercised more so she would be better prepared for the marathon.</p> <p>3. Margaret ought to come to the fitness center with us tonight.</p>	<p>1. Margaret ought not exercise too much. It might cause injury.</p> <p>2. Margaret ought not have run the marathon. She wasn't in good shape.</p> <p>3. Margaret ought not stay at home in front of the TV. She should go to the fitness center with us.</p>	should

ought to <i>ASSUMPTION, EXPECTATION, PROBABILITY</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. She ought to have the package by now. 2. She ought to have received the package yesterday. 3. She ought to receive the package tonight. 	<i>"OUGHT NOT" IS USED PRIMARILY TO EXPRESS NEGATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS. (SEE ABOVE.)</i>	should
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Notice "Ought not"

Remember that "ought to" loses the "to" in the negative. Instead of "ought not to," we say "ought not." "Ought not" is more commonly used in British English. Americans prefer "should not."

Examples:

- You ought not smoke so much.
- She ought not take such risks while skiing.
- They ought not carry so much cash while traveling.

Shall

"Shall" is used to indicate future action. It is most commonly used in sentences with "I" or "we," and is often found in suggestions, such as "Shall we go?" "Shall" is also frequently used in promises or voluntary actions. In formal English, the use of "shall" to describe future events often expresses inevitability or predestination. "Shall" is much more commonly heard in British English than in American English; Americans prefer to use other forms, although they do sometimes use "shall" in suggestions or formalized language.

Examples:

- Shall I help you? *SUGGESTION*
- I shall never forget where I came from. *PROMISE*
- He shall become our next king. *PREDESTINATION*
- I'm afraid Mr. Smith shall become our new director. *INEVITABILITY*

More Examples of "Shall"

Modal Use	Positive Forms	Negative Forms	You can also use:
shall <i>FUTURE ACTION</i> (British form)	I shall be replaced by someone from the New York office. I shall be there by 8:00.	I shall not be replaced after all. I shall not be there. I have a previous obligation.	will
shall <i>SUGGESTIONS</i>	Shall we begin dinner? Shall we move into the living room?		should
shall <i>VOLUNTEERING, PROMISING</i> (British form)	I shall take care of everything for you. I shall make the travel arrangements. There's no need to worry.	I shall never forget you. I shall never give up the fight for freedom.	will

shall <i>INEVITABILITY</i> (British form)	Man shall explore the distant regions of the universe. We shall overcome oppression.	Man shall never give up the exploration of the universe. He shall not be held back.	
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Should

"Should" is most commonly used to make recommendations or give advice. It can also be used to express obligation as well as expectation.

Examples:

- When you go to Berlin, you should visit the palaces in Potsdam. *RECOMMENDATION*
- You should focus more on your family and less on work. *ADVICE*
- I really should be in the office by 7:00 AM. *OBLIGATION*
- By now, they should already be in Dubai. *EXPECTATION*

Using "Should" in Present, Past, and Future

Most modal verbs behave quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the chart below to learn how "should" behaves in different contexts.

Modal Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
should <i>RECOMMENDATION, ADVISABILITY</i>	<p>1. People with high cholesterol should eat low-fat foods.</p> <p>2. Frank should have eaten low-fat foods. That might have prevented his heart attack.</p> <p>3. You really should start eating better.</p>	<p>1. Sarah shouldn't smoke so much. It's not good for her health.</p> <p>2. Sarah shouldn't have smoked so much. That's what caused her health problems.</p> <p>3. Sarah shouldn't smoke when she visits Martha next week. Martha hates when people smoke in her house.</p>	ought to

should <i>OBLIGATION</i>	<p>I should be at work before 9:00.</p> <p>We should return the video before the video rental store closes.</p> <p>"SHOULD" CAN ALSO EXPRESS SOMETHING BETWEEN RECOMMENDATION AND OBLIGATION. "BE SUPPOSED TO" EXPRESSES A SIMILAR IDEA AND CAN EASILY BE USED IN THE PAST OR IN NEGATIVE FORMS.</p>	NO NEGATIVE FORMS	be supposed to
should <i>EXPECTATION</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Susan should be in New York by now. 2. Susan should have arrived in New York last week. Let's call her and see what she is up to. 3. Susan should be in New York by next week. Her new job starts on Monday. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Susan shouldn't be in New York yet. 2. Susan shouldn't have arrived in New York until yesterday. 3. Susan shouldn't arrive in New York until next week. 	ought to, be supposed to

Will

"Will" is used with promises or voluntary actions that take place in the future. "Will" can also be used to make predictions about the future. For more information on using "will" and associated exercises, visit the Simple Future section of our Verb Tense Tutorial.

Examples:

- I promise that I will write you every single day. *PROMISE*
- I will make dinner tonight. *VOLUNTARY ACTION*
- He thinks it will rain tomorrow. *PREDICTION*

More Examples of "Will"

Modal Use	Positive Forms	Negative Forms	You can also use:
will <i>FUTURE ACTION, PREDICTION</i>	The marketing director will be replaced by someone from the New York office. Fred will be there by 8:00.	The marketing director will not be replaced after all. Fred will not be there. He has a previous obligation.	shall
will <i>VOLUNTEERING, PROMISING</i>	I will take care of everything for you. I will make the travel arrangements. There's no need to worry.	I will never forget you. I will never give up the fight for freedom.	shall

Would

"Would" is most commonly used to create conditional verb forms. It also serves as the past form of the modal verb "will." Additionally, "would" can indicate repetition in the past. For more information on the grammar behind the modal verb "would," visit the following tutorials: Conditional Tutorial, Future in the Past, and Would Always.

Examples:

- If he were an actor, he would be in adventure movies. **CONDITIONAL**
- I knew that she would be very successful in her career. **PAST OF "WILL"**
- When they first met, they would always have picnics on the beach. **REPETITION**

Using "Would" in Present, Past, and Future

Modal Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
would <i>CONDITIONAL</i>	<p>1. If I were president, I would cut the cost of education.</p> <p>2. If I had been president, I would have cut the cost of education.</p> <p>3. If I were elected president next year, I would cut the cost of education.</p>	<p>1. If I were president, I would not raise taxes.</p> <p>2. If I had been president, I would not have raised taxes.</p> <p>3. If I were president, I would not sign the tax increase next week.</p>	
would <i>PAST OF "WILL"</i>	<p>I said I would help you.</p> <p>He told me he would be here before 8:00.</p>	<p>I said I wouldn't help you.</p> <p>He told me he would not be here before 8:00.</p>	
would <i>REPETITION IN PAST</i>	<p>When I was a kid, I would always go to the beach.</p> <p>When he was young, he would always do his homework.</p>	<p>When I was a kid, I wouldn't go into the water by myself.</p> <p>When he got older, he would never do his homework.</p>	used to

Modal Forms

Modal verbs can be used in a variety of different forms. Study the examples below.

Modal Simple

I could swim at the beach.

Modal Continuous

I could be swimming at the beach right now.

Modal Perfect

I could have swum at the beach yesterday.

Modal Perfect Continuous

I could have been swimming at the beach instead of working in the office.

Passive Modal Simple

The room should be cleaned once a day.

Passive Modal Continuous

The room should be being cleaned now.

Passive Modal Perfect

The room should have been cleaned yesterday.

Passive Modal Perfect Continuous

The room should have been being cleaned but nobody was there. (Rare form)

Gerunds and Infinitives

1. A gerund is a noun made from a verb by adding "-ing." The gerund form of the verb "read" is "reading." You can use a gerund as the subject, the complement, or the object of a sentence.

Examples:

- **Reading helps you learn English.** *SUBJECT OF SENTENCE*
- **Her favorite hobby is reading.** *COMPLEMENT OF SENTENCE*
- **I enjoy reading.** *OBJECT OF SENTENCE*

Gerunds can be made negative by adding "not."

Examples:

- **He enjoys not working.**
- **The best thing for your health is not smoking.**

2. Infinitives are the "to" form of the verb. The infinitive form of "learn" is "to learn." You can also use an infinitive as the subject, the complement, or the object of a sentence.

Examples:

- **To learn is important.** *SUBJECT OF SENTENCE*
- **The most important thing is to learn.** *COMPLEMENT OF SENTENCE*
- **He wants to learn.** *OBJECT OF SENTENCE*

Infinitives can be made negative by adding "not."

Examples:

- **I decided not to go.**
- **The most important thing is not to give up.**

3. Both gerunds and infinitives can be used as the subject or the complement of a sentence. However, as subjects or complements, gerunds usually sound more like normal, spoken English, whereas infinitives sound more abstract. In the following sentences, gerunds sound more natural and would be more common in everyday English. Infinitives emphasize the possibility or potential for something and sound more philosophical. If this sounds confusing, just remember that 90% of the time, you will use a gerund as the subject or complement of a sentence.

Examples:

- **Learning is important.** *NORMAL SUBJECT*
- **To learn is important.** *ABSTRACT SUBJECT - LESS COMMON*
- **The most important thing is learning.** *NORMAL COMPLEMENT*
- **The most important thing is to learn.** *ABSTRACT COMPLEMENT - LESS COMMON*

4. As the object of a sentence, it is more difficult to choose between a gerund or an infinitive. In such situations, gerunds and infinitives are not normally interchangeable. Usually, the main verb in the sentence determines whether you use a gerund or an infinitive.

Examples:

- **He enjoys swimming.** *"ENJOY" REQUIRES A GERUND.*
- **He wants to swim.** *"WANT" REQUIRES AN INFINITIVE.*

5. Some verbs are followed by gerunds as objects. [List of Verbs Followed by Gerunds](#)

Examples:

- **She suggested going to a movie.**
- **Mary keeps talking about her problems.**

6. Some verbs are followed by infinitives. [List of Verbs Followed by Infinitives](#)

Examples:

- **She wants to go to a movie.**
- **Mary needs to talk about her problems.**

7. Gerunds can often be modified with possessive forms such as his, her, its, your, their, our, John's, Mary's, the machine's and so on. This makes it clearer who or what is performing the action.

Examples:

- **I enjoyed their singing.** *THEY WERE SINGING.*
- **She understood his saying no to the offer.** *HE SAID NO.*
- **Sam resented Debbie's coming late to the dinner.** *DEBBIE CAME LATE TO THE DINNER.*
- **We discussed the machine's being broken.** *THE MACHINE IS BROKEN.*

8. Some verbs are followed by a noun plus an infinitive. In some situations, the noun is required. In other situations, the noun is optional. [List of Verbs Followed by a Noun + an Infinitive](#)

Examples:

- The police ordered the man to stop. *NOUN IS REQUIRED*
- She asked to leave. *NOUN IS OPTIONAL*
- She asked him to leave. *NOUN IS OPTIONAL*

9. Some verbs are usually followed by a gerund, BUT they can also be followed by a noun plus infinitive. Using a noun plus infinitive will usually change who is performing the action. [List of Verbs followed by a Gerund OR a Noun + Infinitive](#)

Examples:

- I advised taking the train. *IN GENERAL*
- I advised him to take the train. *HE WILL TAKE THE TRAIN.*

10. There are many "go + gerund" expressions used for adventure sports and individual recreational activities. [List of Go + Gerund Combinations](#)

Examples:

- I go swimming every weekend.
- Would you ever go skydiving?

11. Gerunds are used after prepositions. Most commonly, these are "verb + preposition" combinations. For reference, see the [Verb + Preposition Dictionary](#) and the [Phrasal Verb Dictionary](#). You don't have to memorize these resources; you just need to remember that gerunds are used after prepositions!

Examples:

- They admitted to committing the crime.
- Leslie made up for forgetting my birthday.
- He is thinking about studying abroad.

12. Remember that there are many "adjective + preposition" combinations and "noun + preposition" combinations in English as well. These are also followed by gerunds. [List of Adjective + Preposition Combinations Followed by Gerunds](#) and [List of Noun + Preposition Combinations Followed by Gerunds](#). Once again, you don't have to memorize these resources; you just need to remember that gerunds are used after prepositions!

Examples:

- **Sandy is scared of flying.** *ADJECTIVE + PREPOSITION*
- **Nick is anxious about taking the examination.** *ADJECTIVE + PREPOSITION*
- **His interest in becoming a professional snowboarder was well known.** *NOUN + PREPOSITION*
- **Thomas' story about seeing a grizzly bear was really exciting.** *NOUN + PREPOSITION*

13. Some verbs can be followed by a gerund or an infinitive, but with a difference in meaning. [List of Verbs Followed by a Gerund or Infinitive \(Different Meaning\)](#)

Examples:

- **Nancy remembered getting married.** *NANCY HAS A MEMORY OF GETTING MARRIED.*
- **Fred remembered to bring sunblock to the beach.** *FRED REMEMBERED THAT HE NEEDED TO BRING SUNBLOCK.*

14. Some verbs can be followed by a gerund or an infinitive with little difference in meaning. [List of Verbs Followed by a Gerund or Infinitive \(Similar Meaning\)](#)

Examples:

- **She likes swimming.**
- **She likes to swim.**

Although the difference in meaning is small with these particular verbs and gerunds and infinitives can often be used interchangeably, there is still a meaning difference. Using a gerund suggests that you are referring to real activities or experiences. Using an infinitive suggests that you are talking about potential or possible activities or experiences. Because of this small difference in meaning, gerunds and infinitives cannot always be used interchangeably, such as in the examples below.

Examples:

- **The British reporter likes living in New York.** *HE LIVES IN NEW YORK AND HE LIKES WHAT HE EXPERIENCES THERE.*
- **The British reporter likes to live in New York whenever he works in the United States.** *HE LIKES THE OPTION OR POSSIBILITY OF LIVING IN NEW YORK WHEN HE WORKS IN THE UNITED STATES.*
- **I like speaking French because it's such a beautiful language.** *I LIKE THE EXPERIENCE OF SPEAKING FRENCH, AND THE WAY IT MAKES ME FEEL WHEN I SPEAK THE LANGUAGE.*
- **I like to speak French when I'm in France.** *I PREFER THE OPTION OF SPEAKING FRENCH WHEN I AM IN FRANCE.*

15. There are many "be + adjective" combinations that are commonly followed by infinitives. [List of Be + Adjective Combinations Followed by Infinitives](#)

Examples:

- They were anxious to begin.
- She was delighted to receive such good feedback.
- He is lucky to have such good friends.

16. There are also many nouns that are commonly followed by infinitives. [List of Nouns Followed by Infinitives](#)

Examples:

- It was a good decision to move to San Francisco.
- His wish to become an actor was well known.
- Laura's desire to improve impressed me.

17. Sometimes infinitives are used to express the idea of "in order to do something."

Examples:

- He bought the English dictionary to look up difficult words. *IN ORDER TO LOOK UP*
- Janine sold her car to get the money that she needed. *IN ORDER TO GET*
- Juan uses Englishpage.com to learn English. *IN ORDER TO LEARN*

This idea of "in order to do something" is found in many English patterns.

too + adjective/adverb + infinitive

Examples:

- The box is too heavy to carry.
- The television is too expensive to buy.
- Fiona ran too slowly to win the race.
- We arrived too late to see the beginning of the movie.

adjective/adverb + enough + infinitive

Examples:

- She is tall enough to reach the book on the shelf.
- Brian was smart enough to enter college at the age of 12.

- Linda runs quickly enough to win the race.

enough + noun(s) + infinitive

Examples:

- He has enough money to buy his own car.
- Cheryl owns enough books to start her own library!
- Diane needs enough time to finish writing her book.

18. Certain expressions are followed by "ING" forms. [List of Expressions followed by Verb+ing Forms](#)

Examples:

- He had fun fishing.
- They had difficulty finding a parking place.
- She spent her time practicing the piano.

19. Verbs which indicate location can often be followed by "ING" forms. This pattern is VERB OF LOCATION + LOCATION + VERB+ING. [List of Verbs of Location](#)

Examples:

- Sarah stood at the corner waiting for Tom.
- Melissa lay in bed thinking about her future.
- Don clung to the side of the cliff looking down.

20. In addition to simple gerund and infinitive forms, there are progressive gerund and infinitive forms, passive gerund and infinitive forms and perfect gerund and infinitive forms as well as combinations of these forms. Progressive forms are used to emphasize that an action is taking place now. Passive forms are used to emphasize that the subject of the sentence is being acted upon. Perfect gerund and infinitive forms are used to emphasize completion in both the past and the future. Study the examples below to help understand these concepts. To learn more about progressiveness, the passive voice and the perfect aspect, complete the [Englishpage.com Verb Tense Tutorial](#).

	GERUND FORMS	INFINITIVE FORMS
SIMPLE	The teacher enjoys teaching.	The teacher wants to teach.
PROGRESSIVE	Mr. Smith is really enjoying teaching his class. <i>LOOKS THE SAME AS SIMPLE FORM ABOVE.</i>	Mr. Smith would like to be teaching his class.
PASSIVE	The students enjoy being taught.	The students want to be taught.
PERFECT	The retired teacher recalled having taught.	The teacher was expecting to have taught that already.
PASSIVE + PROGRESSIVE	The students are enjoying being taught by such an exciting new teacher. <i>LOOKS THE SAME AS THE PASSIVE FORM ABOVE.</i>	The students would like to be being taught by Mr. Smith.
PASSIVE + PERFECT	The older students recalled having been taught that already.	The students were expecting to have been taught that by now.

Verbs Followed by Gerunds

9 = verb followed by a gerund OR a noun + an infinitive

13 = verb followed by a gerund OR an infinitive with a difference in meaning

14 = verb followed by a gerund OR an infinitive with little difference in meaning

admit	He admitted cheating on the test.
advise [9]	The doctor generally advised drinking low-fat milk.
allow [9]	Ireland doesn't allow smoking in bars.
anticipate	I anticipated arriving late.
appreciate	I appreciated her helping me.
avoid	He avoided talking to her.
begin [14]	I began learning Chinese.
can't bear [14]	He can't bear having so much responsibility.
can't help	He can't help talking so loudly.
can't see	I can't see paying so much money for a car.
can't stand [14]	He can't stand her smoking in the office.
cease [14]	The government ceased providing free healthcare.
complete	He completed renovating the house.
consider	She considered moving to New York.
continue [14]	He continued talking.
defend	The lawyer defended her making such statements.
delay	He delayed doing his taxes.
deny	He denied committing the crime.

despise	She despises waking up early.
discuss	We discussed working at the company.
dislike	She dislikes working after 5 PM.
don't mind	I don't mind helping you.
dread [13]	She dreads getting up at 5 AM.
encourage [9]	He encourages eating healthy foods.
enjoy	We enjoy hiking.
finish [13]	He finished doing his homework.
forget [13]	I forgot giving you my book.
hate [14]	I hate cleaning the bathroom.
imagine	He imagines working there one day.
involve	The job involves traveling to Japan once a month.
keep	She kept interrupting me.
like [14]	She likes listening to music.
love [14]	I love swimming.
mention	He mentioned going to that college.
mind	Do you mind waiting here for a few minutes.
miss	She misses living near the beach.
need [13]	The aquarium needs cleaning.
neglect [14]	Sometimes she neglects doing her homework.
permit [9]	California does not permit smoking in restaurants.

postpone	He postponed returning to Paris.
practice	She practiced singing the song.
prefer [14]	He prefers sitting at the back of the movie theater.
propose [14]	I proposed having lunch at the beach.
quit [13]	She quit worrying about the problem.
recall	Tom recalled using his credit card at the store.
recollect	She recollects living in Kenya.
recommend	Tony recommended taking the train.
regret [13]	She regretted saying that.
remember [13]	I remember telling her the address yesterday.
report	He reported her stealing the money.
require [9]	The certificate requires completing two courses.
resent	Nick resented Debbie's being there.
resist	He resisted asking for help.
risk	He risked being caught.
start [14]	He started studying harder.
stop [13]	She stopped working at 5 o'clock.
suggest	They suggested staying at the hotel.
tolerate	I tolerated her talking.
try [13]	Sam tried opening the lock with a paperclip.
understand	I understand his quitting.

urge [9]**They urge recycling bottles and paper.**

Verbs Followed by Infinitives

- 8 = verb followed by an infinitive OR an optional noun + an infinitive
 13 = verb followed by a gerund OR an infinitive with a difference in meaning
 14 = verb followed by a gerund OR an infinitive with little difference in meaning

agree	Tom agreed to help me.
appear	His health appeared to be better.
arrange	Naomi arranged to stay with her cousin in Miami.
ask [8]	She asked to leave.
begin [13]	He began to talk.
can't bear [14]	He can't bear to be alone.
can't stand [14]	Nancy can't stand to work the late shift.
care	He doesn't care to participate in the activity.
cease [14]	The government ceased to provide free healthcare.
choose [8]	I chose to help.
claim	She claimed to be a princess.
continue [14]	She continued to talk.
decide	We decided to go to Hawaii.
demand	He demanded to speak to Mr. Harris.
deserve	He deserves to go to jail.
dread [13]	I dread to think what might happen.
expect [8]	They expect to arrive early.
fail	He failed to get enough money to pay for the new project.

forget [13]	I forgot to lock the door when I left.
get (be allowed to)	Debbie gets to go to the concert next week! Why can't I?
happen	She happened to be at the bank when it was robbed.
hate [14]	He hates to clean dishes.
hesitate	She hesitated to tell me the problem.
hope	I hope to begin college this year.
intend	We intend to visit you next spring.
learn	I learned to speak Japanese when I was a kid.
like [14]	Samantha likes to read.
love [14]	We love to scuba dive.
manage	He managed to open the door without the key.
need [8,13]	I need to study.
neglect [14]	She neglected to tell me the date of the meeting.
offer	Frank offered to drive us to the supermarket.
plan	We plan to go to Europe this summer.
prefer [14]	He prefers to eat at 7 PM.
prepare [8]	They prepared to take the test.
pretend	The child pretended to be a monster.
promise [8]	She promised to stop smoking.
propose [14]	Drew proposed to pay for the trip.
refuse	The guard refused to let them enter the building.

regret [13]	I regret to inform you that your application was rejected.
remember [13]	Did you remember to lock the door when you left?
seem	Nancy seemed to be disappointed.
start [13]	Marge started to talk really fast.
swear	She swore to tell the truth.
tend	He tends to be a little shy.
threaten [8]	He threatened to leave forever.
try [13]	Mary tried to lift the table, but it was too heavy.
vow	He vowed to get revenge.
wait	She waited to buy a movie ticket.
want [8]	I want to study Spanish.
wish [8]	I wish to stay.
would like [8] (meaning "wish" or "want")	We would like to start now.
yearn	Melanie yearns to travel somewhere exotic.

Verbs Followed by Nouns + Infinitives

9 = verb followed by a gerund OR a noun + an infinitive

13 = verb followed by a gerund OR an infinitive with a difference in meaning

List 1: Verb + Required Noun + Infinitive

advise [9]	I advised them to see a doctor.
allow [9]	Ireland doesn't allow people to smoke in bars.
cause	He caused her to make a mistake.
convince	Ned convinced me to quit my job.
enable	Financial aid enabled the students to pay such expensive tuition fees.
encourage [9]	He encourages his patients to eat healthy foods.
force	The commander forced the soldiers to march in the rain.
get (cause to)	Isabelle got Mike to wash her car.
hire	Mr. Donelly hired Sarah to work as a receptionist.
invite	We invited them to join us.
order	The police ordered him to put his hands in the air.
permit [9]	California doesn't permit people to fish without a fishing license.
remind	They reminded me to pay the bills before the end of the month.

require [9]	The certificate requires students to complete two courses.
tell	He told me to shut up.
urge [9]	They urge citizens to recycle bottles and paper.
warn	She warned him not to be late.

List 2: Verb + Optional Noun + Infinitive

Notice in the examples below that the verbs can be followed by an infinitive or a noun plus an infinitive. When a noun is added, it usually changes who or what is performing the action. To understand this better, look at the first verb "ask" and its examples. In the first sentence, she is asking if she herself can leave. In the second sentence, she is requesting that a man leave. Study the examples below and consider how the optional noun changes the meaning.

ask	She asked to leave.	She asked him to leave.
choose	I chose to help out.	I chose him to help out.
expect	They expect to arrive early.	They expect him to arrive early.
need [13]	I need to clean the house.	I need her to clean the house.
prepare	They prepared to take the test.	They prepared her to take the test.
promise	She promised to stop smoking	She promised him to stop smoking.
threaten	He threatened to leave forever.	He threatened her to leave forever.
want	I want to study Spanish.	I want my son to study Spanish.
wish	I wish to stay.	I wish him to stay. <i>RARE FORM</i>
would like	We would like to start now.	We would like him to start now.

Verbs Followed by Either Gerunds OR Nouns + Infinitives

advise	I advised seeing a doctor.	I advised them to see a doctor.
allow	Ireland doesn't allow smoking in bars.	Ireland doesn't allow people to smoke in bars.
encourage	He encourages eating healthy foods.	He encourages his patients to eat healthy foods.
permit	California doesn't permit fishing without a fishing license.	California doesn't permit people to fish without a fishing license.
require	The certificate requires completing two courses.	The certificate requires students to complete two courses.
urge	They urge recycling bottles and paper.	They urge citizens to recycle bottles and paper.

Go + Gerund List

go boating	go sailing
go bowling	go scuba diving
go bungee jumping	go shopping
go camping	go sightseeing
go canoeing	go skateboarding
go climbing	go skating
go dancing	go skiing
go fishing	go skinny-dipping
go hiking	go skydiving
go horseback riding	go sledding
go hunting	go snorkeling
go jogging	go snowboarding
go kayaking	go spearfishing
go mountain climbing	go surfing
go paragliding	go trekking
go parasailing	go water skiing
go rollerblading	go window shopping
go running	go windsurfing

Adjective + Preposition Combinations Followed by Gerunds

The following is ONLY A SAMPLE LIST of the most commonly used adjective + preposition combinations that can be followed by gerunds.

accustomed to	He is accustomed to having his own office.
addicted to	She is addicted to watching TV.
afraid of	She is afraid of speaking in public.
anxious about	Norma is anxious about making the presentation.
bored of	I am bored of doing the same old job.
capable of	He is capable of winning a gold medal.
committed to	She is committed to improving her English.
concerned about	Nancy was concerned about being late.
content with	Tim is content with winning second place.
dedicated to	The organization is dedicated to ending poverty.
devoted to	The money will be devoted to protecting the environment.
disappointed with	Fiona was disappointed with coming in third place.
discouraged by	He was discouraged by not getting the job.
excited about	The researcher was excited about going to Africa.
famous for	That actor is famous for being extremely weird.
fond of	She is fond of having picnics.
frightened of	She is frightened of being alone at night.
guilty of	The banker was guilty of stealing money.

happy about	He was happy about winning the lottery.
interested in	She is interested in becoming a doctor.
involved in	He was involved in making the movie.
known for	She was known for causing problems.
opposed to	They are opposed to building a new road in the park.
proud of	He was proud of having completed the marathon.
remembered for	She is remembered for protecting mountain gorillas.
responsible for	He is responsible for causing the damage.
scared of	Tina is scared of being alone at night.
terrified of	The surfer is terrified of being attacked by a shark.
tired from	She is tired from working all day.
tired of	Margaret is tired of making dinner every night.
worried about	The hikers were worried about not having enough water.

Noun + Preposition Combinations Followed by Gerunds

The following is ONLY A SAMPLE LIST of the most commonly used noun + preposition combinations that can be followed by gerunds.

addiction to	His addiction to surfing the Internet is a problem.
advantage of	He has the advantage of speaking English fluently.
anxiety about	Her anxiety about speaking in public caused her to lose the job.
belief in	His belief in not harming animals was something he learned from his mother.
credit for	She took credit for improving the filing system.
dedication to	His dedication to teaching was impressive.
delay in	The delay in processing the visa caused problems.
devotion to	His devotion to biking allowed him to win the competition.
disadvantage of	The disadvantage of flying is that you can't see the scenery along the way.
experience in	<p>She has a great deal of experience in introducing new products to international markets.</p> <p><i>WITH THE NOUN "EXPERIENCE," SOMETIMES A GERUND IS ADDED WITHOUT THE PREPOSITION "IN." "EXPERIENCE INTRODUCING NEW PRODUCTS" WOULD ALSO BE ACCEPTABLE.</i></p>
fear of	His fear of flying made travel difficult.
fondness for	Her fondness for traveling led to her career in the travel industry.
habit of	His habit of smoking in restaurants caused many problems in California.
interest in	Her career as a pilot evolved out of her interest in flying.
knowledge of	Her knowledge of climbing helped her during the competition.

love of	His love of singing developed when he was a child.
memory of	Their memories of traveling in Africa will stay with them forever.
preference for	I think his preference for speaking his native language is natural.
process of	The process of painting such a large mural is more complicated than you might think.
reaction to	His reaction to winning the prize was quite funny.
reason for	The main reason for taking the course is to improve your language skills.
regret for	The criminal's regret for committing the crime did not convince the judge.
report on	The magazine's report on choosing the right car was not well researched.
reputation for	Her reputation for lying is well known.
responsibility for	His responsibility for completing the project on time was acknowledged by the company.
story about	I don't know if I believe his story about seeing a UFO.
talent for	His talent for learning languages was impressive.

Verbs Followed by Gerunds OR Infinitives (Different Meaning)

begin	<p>She began singing. She began to sing.</p> <p><i>WHEN "BEGIN" IS USED IN NON-CONTINUOUS TENSES, YOU CAN EITHER USE A GERUND OR AN INFINITIVE.</i></p>	<p>She is beginning to sing.</p> <p><i>WHEN "BEGIN" IS USED IN CONTINUOUS TENSES, AN INFINITIVE IS USED.</i></p>
dread	<p>She dreaded taking the test.</p> <p><i>USUALLY "DREAD" IS FOLLOWED BY A GERUND.</i></p>	<p>He dreaded to think of the consequences of his actions.</p> <p><i>"DREAD" IS SOMETIMES USED WITH INFINITIVES SUCH AS "THINK" OR "CONSIDER." IN THE SENTENCE ABOVE, "DREADED TO THINK" MEANS "DID NOT WANT TO THINK."</i></p>
forget	<p>She forgot reading the book when she was a kid.</p> <p><i>WHEN "FORGET" IS USED WITH A GERUND, IT MEANS "TO FORGET THAT YOU HAVE DONE SOMETHING." THE SENTENCE ABOVE MEANS THAT SHE READ THE BOOK WHEN SHE WAS A KID, AND THAT SHE HAS FORGOTTEN THAT FACT.</i></p>	<p>She forgot to pay the rent this month.</p> <p><i>WHEN FORGET IS USED WITH AN INFINITIVE, IT MEANS "TO FORGET THAT YOU NEED TO DO SOMETHING." THE SENTENCE ABOVE MEANS THAT SHE FORGOT THAT SHE NEEDED TO PAY THE RENT.</i></p>
keep	<p>She kept talking.</p> <p><i>"KEEP" IS NORMALLY USED WITH A GERUND TO MEAN THAT YOU CONTINUE DOING AN ACTION.</i></p>	<p>The attackers kept hostages to prevent the police from entering.</p> <p><i>"KEEP" CAN ALSO BE USED WITH AN OBJECT FOLLOWED BY AN INFINITIVE, BUT THEN THE INFINITIVE TAKES ON THE MEANING OF "IN ORDER TO... ." IN THE SENTENCE ABOVE, THE ATTACKERS KEPT HOSTAGES IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE POLICE FROM ENTERING.</i></p>
need	<p>The house needs cleaning.</p> <p><i>WHEN "NEED" IS USED WITH A GERUND, IT TAKES ON A PASSIVE MEANING. THE SENTENCE ABOVE MEANS "THE HOUSE NEEDS TO BE CLEANED."</i></p>	<p>He needs to call his boss. He needs him to call his boss.</p> <p><i>"NEED" IS USUALLY USED WITH AN INFINITIVE OR AN OBJECT + AN INFINITIVE.</i></p>

regret	<p>I regretted being late to the interview.</p> <p>"REGRET" IS NORMALLY USED WITH A GERUND.</p>	<p>We regret to inform you that your position at the company is being eliminated.</p> <p>"REGRET" IS SOMETIMES USED WITH INFINITIVES SUCH AS "TO INFORM." IN THE SENTENCE ABOVE, "WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU" MEANS "WE WISH WE DID NOT HAVE TO TELL YOU (BAD NEWS)."</p>
remember	<p>I remember mentioning the meeting yesterday.</p> <p>WHEN "REMEMBER" IS USED WITH A GERUND, IT MEANS "TO REMEMBER THAT YOU HAVE DONE SOMETHING." THE SENTENCE ABOVE MEANS THAT I MENTIONED THE MEETING, AND THAT I REMEMBER THE FACT THAT I DID THAT.</p>	<p>He remembered to turn off the lights before he left.</p> <p>WHEN "REMEMBER" IS USED WITH AN INFINITIVE, IT MEANS "TO REMEMBER THAT YOU NEED TO DO SOMETHING." THE SENTENCE ABOVE MEANS THAT HE REMEMBERED THAT HE NEEDED TO TURN THE LIGHTS OFF.</p>
start	<p>Marge started talking really fast.</p> <p>Marge started to talk really fast.</p> <p>WHEN "START" IS USED IN NON-CONTINUOUS TENSES, YOU CAN EITHER USE A GERUND OR AN INFINITIVE.</p>	<p>Marge is starting to talk really fast.</p> <p>WHEN "START" IS USED IN CONTINUOUS TENSES, AN INFINITIVE IS USED.</p> <p>I started to learn Russian, but it was so much work that I finally quit the class.</p> <p>IN OTHER SITUATIONS, AN INFINITIVE MEANS THAT YOU DID NOT COMPLETE OR CONTINUE AN ACTION.</p>
stop	<p>He stopped smoking for health reasons.</p> <p>"STOP" IS NORMALLY USED WITH A GERUND.</p>	<p>He stopped to rest for a few minutes.</p> <p>WHEN "STOP" IS USED WITH AN INFINITIVE, THE INFINITIVE TAKES ON THE MEANING OF "IN ORDER TO." IN THE SENTENCE ABOVE, HE STOPPED IN ORDER TO REST FOR A FEW MINUTES.</p>

try	<p>She can't find a job. She tried looking in the paper, but there was nothing. She tried asking friends and family, but nobody knew of anything. She also tried going shop to shop, but nobody was hiring.</p> <p>"TRY + GERUND" MEANS TO TRY OR TO EXPERIMENT WITH DIFFERENT METHODS TO SEE IF SOMETHING WORKS.</p> <p>She tried eating the snake soup, but she didn't like it.</p> <p>"TRY + GERUND" IS OFTEN USED WHEN YOU EXPERIMENT WITH SOMETHING, BUT YOU DO NOT REALLY LIKE IT OR WANT TO DO IT AGAIN.</p>	<p>She tried to climb the tree, but she couldn't even get off the ground.</p> <p>WHEN YOU "TRY TO DO" SOMETHING, YOU WANT TO DO IT, BUT YOU DO NOT SUCCEED IN ACTUALLY DOING IT. IN THE SENTENCE ABOVE, AN INFINITIVE IS USED BECAUSE SHE CANNOT SUCCESSFULLY CLIMB THE TREE.</p> <p>Try not to wake the baby when you get up tomorrow at 5 AM.</p> <p>AN INFINITIVE IS ALSO USED IF YOU ARE ASKING SOMEONE TO TRY SOMETHING THEY MAY OR MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH.</p>
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Verbs Followed by Gerunds OR Infinitives (Similar Meaning)

can't bear	He can't bear being alone.	He can't bear to be alone.
can't stand	Nancy can't stand working the late shift.	Nancy can't stand to work the late shift.
cease	The government ceased providing free health care.	The government ceased to provide free health care.
continue	She continued talking.	She continued to talk.
hate	He hates cleaning dishes.	He hates to clean dishes.
like	Samantha likes reading.	Samantha likes to read.
love	We love scuba diving.	We love to scuba dive.
neglect	He neglected doing his daily chores.	He neglected to do his daily chores.
prefer	He prefers eating at 7 PM.	He prefers to eat at 7 PM.
propose	Drew proposed paying for the trip.	Drew proposed to pay for the trip.

REMEMBER

Although the difference in meaning is small with these particular verbs and gerunds and infinitives can often be used interchangeably, there is still a meaning difference. Using a gerund suggests that you are referring to real activities or experiences. Using an infinitive suggests that you are talking about potential or possible activities or experiences. Because of this small difference in meaning, gerunds and infinitives cannot always be used interchangeably, such as in the examples below.

Examples:

- **The British reporter likes living in New York.** *HE LIVES IN NEW YORK AND HE LIKES WHAT HE EXPERIENCES THERE.*
- **The British reporter likes to live in New York whenever he works in the United States.** *HE LIKES THE OPTION OR POSSIBILITY OF LIVING IN NEW YORK WHEN HE WORKS IN THE UNITED STATES.*
- **I like speaking French because it's such a beautiful language.** *I LIKE THE EXPERIENCE OF SPEAKING FRENCH, AND THE WAY IT MAKES ME FEEL WHEN I SPEAK THE LANGUAGE.*
- **I like to speak French when I'm in France.** *I PREFER THE OPTION OF SPEAKING FRENCH WHEN I AM IN FRANCE.*

Be + Adjective Combinations Followed by Infinitives

be amazed	He was amazed to discover the truth.
be anxious	She was anxious to start her new job.
be ashamed	He was ashamed to admit he had lied.
be bound	She is bound to be elected class president.
be careful	They were careful not to reveal the winner of the prize until the end.
be certain	She is certain to get the job.
be content	The student was content to receive second place in the competition.
be delighted	We were delighted to be invited to the wedding.
be determined	He was determined to finish the marathon.
be eager	He was eager to begin.
be eligible	They were not eligible to participate in the program.
be fortunate	She was fortunate to receive the research grant.
be glad	I would be glad to help out.
be happy	She was happy to see them at the party.
be hesitant	Mary was hesitant to say anything.
be liable	The mountain climber is liable to hurt himself if he doesn't use well-made equipment.
be likely	They are likely to show up at any time.
be lucky	You were lucky to have such an opportunity.

be pleased	I am pleased to meet you.
be proud	He was proud to have been chosen to lead the project.
be ready	I'm ready to go now.
be reluctant	The witness was reluctant to reveal what he had seen.
be sad	She was really sad to leave.
be shocked	He was shocked to discover the truth.
be sorry	I am sorry to have to tell you that the tickets are sold out.
be surprised	She was surprised to discover that he had never learned how to swim.

Nouns Followed by Infinitives

advice	His advice to continue was good.
appeal	The appeal to reduce pollution was ineffective.
attempt	Her attempt to locate them was unsuccessful.
chance	In Britain, you will have a chance to improve your English.
decision	The decision to increase taxes was not popular.
desire	His desire to get a good job motivated him.
dream	Her dream to become an actress was never realized.
goal	His goal to run a marathon seemed unrealistic.
motivation	Her motivation to enter university impressed them.
need	Bob's need to be the center of attention was irritating.
opportunity	The opportunity to live in New York interested Sandra.
order	They followed the general's order to retreat.
permission	Permission to enter the area was difficult to get.
plan	Sandy's plan to move to Madrid bothered her parents.
preparation	NASA's preparations to launch on Monday moved forward.
proposal	Her proposal to host the party impressed the committee.
recommendation	His recommendation to close the school upset the community.
refusal	Debra's refusal to help did not go unnoticed.
reminder	Her reminder to review the vocabulary helped me pass the test.
request	Their request to participate was granted.

requirement	Their requirement to speak four languages was unreasonable.
suggestion	His suggestion to leave seemed like a good idea.
tendency	His tendency to tap his desk during a test annoyed me.
wish	Her wish to be treated normally was respected.
way	One way to improve your English is to read novels.

Expressions followed by VERB+ing

have (some) problems	He had some problems reading without his glasses.
have a difficult time	She had a difficult time hiking up the mountain.
have a good time	They had a good time snorkeling.
have a hard time	She had a hard time explaining the situation.
have a problem	Debbie had a problem understanding his accent.
have an easy time	She had an easy time selling the delicious cookies.
have difficulty	Wanda had difficulty translating the letter by herself.
have fun	They had fun skiing.
have no difficulty	They had no difficulty finding a discount flight to London.
have no problem	Francis had no problem getting from the airport to the hotel.
spend one's time	He always spends his time working out at the gym.
waste one's time	She always wastes her time playing video games.

Location Verbs Followed by VERB+ing

cling	She clung to the bottom of the bridge trying to resist the swift current.
cower	The family cowered in their basement hoping the tornado would change directions.
crouch	The mountain lion crouched on a bolder watching the deer walk by below.
hang	The monkey hung in the tree chewing on the ripened fruit.
lean	Tom leaned against the wall resting a few moments before he continued on.
lie	He lay in bed thinking about the day's events.
sit	She always sits on the couch watching TV.
stand	Nancy stood at the corner looking up and down the street.

A vs. An

USE 1

The article **A** is used before singular, countable nouns which begin with consonant sounds.

Examples:

- He is a teacher.
- She doesn't own a car.
- I saw a bear at the zoo.

USE 2

The article **AN** is used before singular, countable nouns which begin with vowel sounds.

Examples:

- He is an actor.
- She didn't get an invitation.
- I saw an eagle at the zoo.

USE 3

Remember that **A(AN)** means "one" or "a single". You cannot use **A(AN)** with plural nouns.

Examples:

- I saw a bears in Yellowstone National Park. **Not Correct**
- I saw bears in Yellowstone National Park. **Correct**

USE 4

If there is an adjective or an adverb-adjective combination before the noun, **A(AN)** should agree with the first sound in the adjective or the adverb-adjective combination.

Examples:

- He is an excellent teacher.
- I saw a really beautiful eagle at the zoo.

USE 5

Use **A** before words such as "European" or "university" which sound like they start with a consonant even if the first letter is a vowel. Also use **A** before letters and numbers which sound like they begin with a consonant, such as "U", "J", "1" or "9". Remember, it is the sound not the spelling which is important. For example, "1" is spelled O-N-E; however, it is pronounced "won" like it starts with a "W".

Examples:

- **She has a euro.** *SOUNDS LIKE "YU-RO".*
- **That number is a "1".** *SOUNDS LIKE "WON".*

USE 6

Use **AN** before words such as "hour" which sound like they start with a vowel even if the first letter is a consonant. Also use **AN** before letters and numbers which sound like they begin with a vowel, such as "F" or "8". Remember, it is the sound not the spelling which is important. For example, "F" is pronounced "eff" like it starts with an "E".

Examples:

- **I only have an hour for lunch.** *SOUNDS LIKE "AU-ER".*
- **Does his name begin with an "F"?** *SOUNDS LIKE "EFF".*

USE 7

Some words such as "herb" or "hospital" are more complicated because they are pronounced differently in different English accents. In most American accents, the "h" in "herb" is silent, so Americans usually say "an herb". In many British accents, the "h" in "herb" is pronounced; so many British say "a herb". In some British accents, the "h" in hospital is silent, so some British will say "an hospital" instead of "a hospital".

USE 8

In English, some nouns are considered uncountable such as: information, air, advice, salt and fun. We do not use **A(AN)** with these uncountable nouns. (Learn more about countable and uncountable nouns.)

Examples:

- **She gives a good advice.** *Not Correct*
- **She gives good advice.** *Correct*

A(An) vs. The

USE 9

A and **AN** are called indefinite articles. "Indefinite" means "not specific".

Use **A(AN)** when you are talking about a thing in general, NOT a specific thing.

Examples:

- **I need a phone.** *NOT A SPECIFIC PHONE, ANY PHONE*
- **Mark wants a bicycle.** *NOT A PARTICULAR BICYCLE, A BICYCLE IN GENERAL*
- **Do you have a driver's license?** *IN GENERAL*

Use **A(AN)** when talking about a thing which is new, unknown, or introduced to a listener for the first time. Also use **A(AN)** when you are asking about the existence of something.

Examples:

- **I have a car.** *THE CAR IS BEING INTRODUCED FOR THE FIRST TIME.*
- **Tom is a teacher.** *THIS IS NEW INFORMATION TO THE LISTENER.*
- **Is there a dictionary in your backpack?** *ASKING ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF THE DICTIONARY*

Similarly, use **A(AN)** to introduce what type of thing we are talking about.

Examples:

- **That is an excellent book.** *DESCRIBING THE KIND OF BOOK*
- **Do you live in a big house?** *ASKING ABOUT THE KIND OF HOUSE*
- **I ate a thick, juicy steak.** *DESCRIBING THE KIND OF STEAK*

REMEMBER: You cannot use **A(AN)** with plural nouns because **A(AN)** means "one" or "a single".

Examples:

- **I saw a bears in Yellowstone National Park.** *Not Correct*
- **I saw bears in Yellowstone National Park.** *Correct*

USE 10

THE is called a definite article. "Definite" means "specific". Use **THE** when talking about something which is already known to the listener or which has been previously mentioned, introduced, or discussed.

Examples:

- I have a cat. The cat is black.
- There is a book in my backpack. The book is very heavy.
- Do you know where I left the car keys? *THE LISTENER KNOWS WHICH SPECIFIC CAR KEYS YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT.*
- Do you own a car? Is the car blue? *YOU ASSUME THEY DO HAVE A CAR AFTER ASKING ABOUT IT IN THE FIRST SENTENCE.*
- Nobody lives on the Moon. *THE MOON IS KNOWN TO EVERYONE.*

IMPORTANT: You can use **THE** with both singular nouns and plural nouns.

Examples:

- I saw the bear in Yellowstone National Park. *Correct*
- I saw the bears in Yellowstone National Park. *Correct*

USE 11

Many clauses and phrases make the noun known to the listener by telling the listener which person or thing we are talking about. Let's look at an example sentence:

Can you give me the book *on the table*?

We use **THE** in this sentence because the phrase "on the table" tells the listener which book we are referring to. We are not talking about other books, we are talking about a specific book that the listener can see or already knows about. Learning to recognize such identifying clauses and phrases will help you use **THE** correctly.

Examples:

- Did you read the book *which I gave you*?
- He didn't like the movie *that you suggested*.
- He loved the dessert *with chocolate and cherries*.
- The phone *on my desk* belongs to Ken.
- Did you know the man *who was talking to Leonie*?

HOWEVER: Not all clauses and phrases make the noun known to the listener. Some are simply descriptive. They add extra information, but they do not tell the listener which specific thing we are talking about.

Examples:

- **He bought the house with a big backyard.** *THIS COMBINATION TELLS THE LISTENER WHICH SPECIFIC HOUSE HE BOUGHT.*
- **He bought a house with a big backyard.** *THIS COMBINATION TELLS THE LISTENER WHAT KIND OF HOUSE HE BOUGHT, BUT NOT THE SPECIFIC HOUSE HE BOUGHT.*

Advanced Article Usage

USE 12

A(AN) can be used like the word "per".

Examples:

- Apples currently cost \$1.30 a pound.
- Cheetahs can run 60 miles an hour.
- You want \$150 a person for the tour?

USE 13

Use **THE** with nouns modified by ranking or ordering expressions such as "the first", "the second", "the third", "the next", "the last", "the previous", "the following", "the penultimate", etc.

Examples:

- This is the fifth day of our conference.
- I'll pay the next time we have dinner.
- Don't forget the following rule.

USE 14

Use **THE** with superlatives such as "the best", "the biggest", "the most important", "the least interesting", etc.

Examples:

- This is the best day ever.
- That is the most expensive hotel room I've ever heard of in my life.
- He told the funniest joke!

Comparative forms, such as "bigger", "better", "more" can be used with both **A(AN)** and **THE** and follow general article usage.

Examples:

- I like the bigger roller coaster.
- He has a more expensive car than I do.

HOWEVER: *THE* is often used with comparative forms (bigger) rather than superlative forms (biggest) when comparing only two things. This is commonly used in phrases such as "the bigger of the two".

Examples:

- Jessie and Shauna are both smart. But I think Shauna is the smarter of the two.
- Between Jason's son and his daughter, his daughter is the better athlete.

USE 15

Do not use articles when generalizing about uncountable nouns and plural countable nouns.

Examples:

- Curiosity is a great trait. *UNCOUNTABLE*
- Water is an important resource. *UNCOUNTABLE*
- Vegetables are good for you. *PLURAL COUNTABLE*

USE 16

English speakers often use *THE* plus a singular noun when they talk about or make generalizations about certain topics, including:

- musical instruments (the piano, the guitar, the flute)
- plants (the coconut palm, the saguaro, the baobab)
- animals (the leopard, the elephant, the lowland gorilla)
- inventions (the steam engine, the plane, the light bulb)
- currencies (the dollar, the euro, the yen)
- body parts (the head, the eye, the ear)

Examples:

- I play the piano.
- The sequoia tree is native to California.
- The dolphin is a very intelligent animal.
- The Wright brothers invented the airplane.
- Right now, the euro is stronger than the dollar.
- Cheryl got poked in the eye.

In general, English speakers choose to use *THE* in this way to give the noun a more abstract or conceptual sound. We choose to say "the piano" to make it sound more like an abstract art form. Similarly, "the dolphin" sounds more like we are referring to the species. Moreover, "the plane" has a more conceptual sound that conveys the idea of invention. But remember, you can also make generalizations about these topics using plurals as in USE 15.

USE 17

The expressions "a few" and "a little" mean "some" and express the idea that you have more than expected.

Examples:

- He always carries a few dollars for emergencies.
- He had a little difficulty with his homework.
- She has a few friends who can help her move.

HOWEVER: The expressions "few" and "little" (without an article) mean "not much" and express the idea that you have less than expected.

Examples:

- Unfortunately, I had little time to enjoy New York because I had to work so much.
- Sadly, he has few people in his life.
- They have little money, so their daughter cannot pay her tuition.

BUT REMEMBER: When the words "only" or "just" are used, "a few" and "a little" also emphasize the meaning "not much".

Examples:

- Unfortunately, I only had a little time to enjoy New York because I had to work so much.
- Sadly, he just has a few people in his life.
- They only have a little money, so their daughter cannot pay her tuition.

USE 18

Generally, articles are not used with the names of illnesses or diseases.

Examples:

- Dr. Smith visits schools and universities to educate students on AIDS.
- Oncologists are doctors who specialize in treating cancer.
- There are several medications that can be used to treat malaria.

HOWEVER: There are some illnesses which require **THE**.

- the measles
- the flu
- the mumps
- the bubonic plague

MOREOVER: There are a few health conditions or illnesses which can be used with both **A(AN)** as well as **THE** and follow general article use. This category includes most aches, pains, growths, and attacks.

- a cold
- a heart attack
- a stroke
- a wart / tumor / growth / etc.
- a sore throat / sore back/ sore foot / etc.
- a headache / toothache / backache / etc.

REMEMBER: This last category follows general article use. Study the examples below.

Examples:

- John has a cold. The cold was pretty bad.
- Nancy had a heart attack. The heart attack seriously weakened her heart.
- Deb had a sore throat. The sore throat made it hard to talk.

USE 19

If a direction (north, west, southeast, left, right) directly follows a verb, do not use an article with the direction.

Examples:

- We need to walk south.
- They drove north all day.
- At the stop sign, turn left and walk three blocks.

HOWEVER: If a direction follows a preposition, you must use **THE**.

Examples:

- We need to walk to the south.
- Our house is in the north.
- The grocery store is on the right.

MOREOVER: Use **THE** with compass directions when referring to them as special geographic or cultural regions.

Examples:

- We love the South.
- Have you ever visited the East?
- The West has better national parks.

USE 20

THE can be used with plural family names to refer to the family as a group.

Examples:

- The Robinsons love to vacation in Florida.
- The Shinoharas are originally from Japan.
- My brother lives next door to the Jacksons.

USE 21

THE can be combined with certain adjectives to refer to a group of people such as "the blind", "the elderly", "the rich", "the French", "the Sioux", etc.

Examples:

- He is elderly. **ADJECTIVE**
- The organization helps the elderly. **ELDERLY PEOPLE**

REMEMBER: This is especially important in situations where nationalities or ethnic groups and their languages might be confused. In such situations, **THE** is used to specify that we are talking about the nationality or ethnic group rather than the language.

Examples:

- I like French. *LANGUAGE*
- I like the French. *THE FRENCH PEOPLE*

HOWEVER: When generalizing about nationalities or ethnic groups that end in "-ans", such as "Americans", "Mexicans", and "Hawaiians", *THE* is not usually used.

Examples:

- Americans watch a lot of TV.
- Germans drink a lot of beer.

USE 22

Do not use *THE* with the names of most countries unless the name contains a word such as "States", "Kingdom", "Republic", "Emirates", "Union", "Coast", etc.

Examples:

- I love Italy.
- John used to live in Japan.
- He lives in the United States.

SIMILARLY: Don't use *THE* with states, provinces, and cities unless *THE* is specifically part of the name or contains a word such as "Territory" or "Coast".

Examples:

- He lives in California.
- Ladakh is in India.
- The Northwest Territories is a province in Canada.

EXCEPTIONS: *THE* is used with "the Netherlands" as well as with many nations which are island chains, such as "the Philippines", "the Maldives", "the Bahamas", etc. Additionally, in the past, *THE* was used with certain countries such as "the Sudan", "the Gambia", and "the Congo"; this usage is becoming less common.

Examples:

- He lives in the Netherlands.
- I visited the Bahamas last year.

USE 23

Use **THE** with the names of:

- oceans
- seas
- coasts
- rivers
- swamps
- archipelagos
- collections of lakes (such as the Great Lakes)
- mountain chains
- deserts
- references on the globe (such as the Equator, the North Pole)
- geographic regions (such as the Northwest, the Middle East)
- bridges (except Tower Bridge)
- pagodas
- hotels
- theaters
- museums
- institutes
- skyscrapers
- the Sun, the Moon
- extraordinary works of art or architecture (such as the Mona Lisa, the Colosseum, the Great Wall of China, and the Taj Mahal)

Examples:

- James visited the Hermitage, a famous museum in St. Petersburg.
- I would love to visit the North Pole.
- Nina walked over the Rialto Bridge.

Use our [Articles Flashcards](#) to memorize the categories in Uses 23 and 24.

USE 24

Do not use an article with:

- individual lakes
- individual islands

- **beaches**
- **waterfalls**
- **individual mountains (except the Matterhorn)**
- **canyons (except the Grand Canyon)**
- **people's first names**
- **streets (except the High Street)**
- **public squares**
- **hospitals**
- **stadiums**
- **malls**
- **parks**
- **churches**
- **temples**
- **universities**
- **colleges**
- **languages**
- **religions**
- **days**
- **months**
- **holidays**

Examples:

- **Have you ever visited Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris?**
- **Kenta is Buddhist.**
- **We went camping in King's Canyon.**

HOWEVER: There are additional exceptions to some of the above categories. For example, **THE** is often used in the pattern "the ... of ...".

Examples:

- **The University of Colorado**
- **The Temple of Ranakpur**
- **The Cathedral of Siena**

Use our [**Articles Flashcards**](#) to memorize the categories in Uses 23 and 24.

USE 25

Time expressions can be especially confusing. **THE** is used in some time expressions such as:

- **in the morning**
- **in the afternoon**
- **in the evening**
- **during the night**
- **during the day**
- **the day before yesterday**
- **the day after tomorrow**
- **the fall**
- **the summer**

Examples:

- **We'll meet in the afternoon.**
- **Jake loves to go camping in the fall.**
- **There was a small earthquake during the night.**

HOWEVER: In other time expressions, no article is used:

- **at night**
- **at noon**
- **at midnight**
- **all day**
- **all night**
- **all month**
- **every month**
- **every year**
- **last night**
- **last Friday**
- **yesterday**
- **tomorrow**

Examples:

- **Did you sleep well last night?**
- **I'll see you tomorrow.**
- **We are meeting for lunch at noon.**

MOREOVER: There are some expressions which can take both **A(AN)** and **THE** such as:

- **a/the whole day**
- **a/the whole month**
- **an/the entire year**
- **an/the entire decade**

Examples:

- **He spent a whole month in Hawaii. I wish I could do that.**
- **I took last Friday off to go to the doctor. I spent the whole day sitting in his office.**
- **When she first moved to Germany, it took an entire year for her to learn enough German to go shopping.**
- **Phil hated the '90s. He spent the whole decade in a dead-end job struggling to pay his rent.**

Definition of Consonant

English consonants include: b c d f g h j k l m n p q r s t v w x y z

Unlike vowel sounds, consonants are created by partly or fully blocking the air stream as it comes out of the mouth.

Definition of Vowel

English vowels include: a e i o u

Unlike consonant sounds, vowel sounds are made with a relatively open airflow out of the mouth as well as vibration of the vocal cords.

Adverbs / Adjectives / Linking Verbs

The following is a mini-tutorial on the use of adverbs, adjectives, and linking verbs. After you have studied the tutorial, complete the associated exercises. If you are already familiar with these topics, you can skip the explanation and go directly to the exercises.

Adverbs

FORM

[adjective + ly]

There are also irregular adverbs such as "well" and "fast."

USE 1

Adverbs can be used to modify verbs.

Examples:

- John walked quickly towards the door.
- Sally sat silently waiting for somebody else to speak first.

USE 2

Adverbs can be used to modify adjectives.

Examples:

- The redwood tree was impressively tall.
- The blouse was outrageously expensive.

USE 3

Adverbs can be used to modify other adverbs.

Examples:

- She spoke extremely confidently.
- The cheetah ran incredibly quickly.

Adjectives

FORM

There are many different adjective endings including "-ive," "-ous," "-y," "-ful," "-ent" and many others. "Attractive," "envious," "lazy," "beautiful" and "intelligent" are all adjectives.

USE 1

Adjectives can be used to modify nouns.

Examples:

- Jack drives a big car.
- Sally writes beautiful poems.

USE 2

Adjectives often follow linking verbs (described below).

Examples:

- Max is tall.
- Sandra seems mad.

Linking Verbs

LIST

- - **to appear**
 - **to be**
 - **to become**
 - **to feel**
 - **to get**
 - **to go**
 - **to grow**
 - **to look**
 - **to prove**
 - **to remain**
 - **to seem**
 - **to smell**
 - **to sound**
 - **to stay**
 - **to taste**
 - **to turn**

USE

The linking verbs above are often followed by adjectives instead of adverbs. In such situations, the adjective describes the subject of the sentence rather than the verb. Study the examples below to learn the difference.

Examples:

- Mary seemed sad. **Correct**
- Mary seemed sadly. **Not Correct**
- The cake tastes good. **Correct**
- The cake tastes well. **Not Correct**
- The train is slow. **Correct**
- The train is slowly. **Not Correct**
- James grew tired. **Correct**
- Sarah remained calm. **Correct**
- The milk went bad. **Correct**
- The seas turned rough. **Correct**
- The negotiations proved pointless. **Correct**

IMPORTANT

The verbs in the list above are not always used as linking verbs. Compare the examples below.

Examples:

- **Sally grew angry.**
"ANGRY" DESCRIBES SALLY. IN THIS SENTENCE, "TO GROW" IS BEING USED AS A LINKING VERB MEANING "TO BECOME."
- **The plant grew quickly.**
"QUICKLY" DOES NOT DESCRIBE THE PLANT, IT DESCRIBES THE MANNER IN WHICH IT GROWS. IN THIS SENTENCE, "TO GROW" IS NOT BEING USED AS A LINKING VERB.

Also / Too / Either

The following is a mini-tutorial on the use of the words "also," "too" and "either." After you have studied the tutorial, complete the associated exercises. If you already know how to use these words, you can skip the explanation and go directly to the exercises.

Also

USE

"Also" is used in positive sentences to add an agreeing thought.

Examples:

- Jane speaks French. Sam also speaks French.
- I love chocolate. I also love pizza.
- Frank can come with us. Nancy can also come with us.

PLACEMENT

"Also" comes after "to be."

Examples:

- I am also Canadian.
- I was also there.

With verbs other than "to be," "also" comes before single verb forms.

Examples:

- I also sing.
- He also helped us.

In verb tenses with many parts, "also" comes after the first part and before the second.

Examples:

- I have also been to Hong Kong.
- I am also studying economics.

Similarly, since modal verbs are usually followed by a second verb, "also" comes after modal verbs.

Examples:

- I can also speak French.
- I should also be there.

Too**USE**

"Too" is used in positive sentences to add an agreeing thought. It has the same meaning as "also," but its placement within the sentence is different.

Examples:

- Jane speaks French. Sam speaks French too.
- I love chocolate. I love pizza too.
- Frank can come with us. Nancy can come with us too.

PLACEMENT

"Too" usually comes at the end of a clause.

Examples:

- I am Canadian too.
- I can speak French too.
- I am studying economics too.
- If he wants to go too, he should meet us at 8:00.

IMPORTANT

Although "too" is usually placed at the end of a clause, it can sometimes be used with commas after the subject of the sentence. This is usually only done in formal speech.

Examples:

- Mr. Jones wanted the contract. Ms. Jackson, too, thought it was necessary.
- Donna is working on a solution to the problem. I, too, am trying to find a way to resolve the conflict.

Either**USE**

"Either" is used in negative sentences to add an agreeing thought.

Examples:

- Jane doesn't speak French. Sam doesn't speak French either.
- I don't love chocolate. I don't love pizza either.
- Frank cannot come with us. Nancy cannot come with us either.

PLACEMENT

"Either" usually comes at the end of a clause.

Examples:

- I cannot speak French either.
- I am not studying economics either.
- I don't want to eat either.
- I didn't like the movie either.

Confusing Sentences

Sometimes the first sentence is negative and the agreeing idea is positive.

Examples:

- The weather wasn't very appealing. I also wanted to stay home and finish my book. That's why I didn't go to the beach.
- The car wasn't expensive, and I needed a way to get around town too. That's why I bought it.

Sometimes the first sentence is positive and the agreeing idea is negative.

Examples:

- Jane is too short. She is not a good athlete either. I don't think she would make a good basketball player.
- He is lazy. He doesn't study either. That's why he doesn't do well in school.

Countable vs. Uncountable Nouns

Did you know that not all nouns are countable in English? Knowing the difference between countable and uncountable nouns can help you in many areas of English grammar.

Countable Nouns

Countable nouns are nouns that can be counted. Most nouns in English are countable.

Examples:

- I have *two* dogs.
- Sandra has *three* cars.
- Jessie has *ten* dollars.

Uncountable Nouns

Uncountable nouns are not counted in English. This usually has to do with the way English speakers think of these nouns. We often picture these nouns as a single concept or one big thing which is hard to divide. Many of these words are countable in other languages, but they ARE NOT countable in English. Generally, we do not use plural forms of these words; however some of these words do end in "s", so don't get confused.

Examples:

- Mack drinks a lot of water.
- Cindy gives great advice.
- Paul enjoys politics. *ENDS WITH "S" BUT UNCOUNTABLE*

Uncountable nouns tend to belong to one of the following categories:

Liquids and Gases

- water
- coffee
- milk
- air
- oxygen

Solid and Granular Substances

- **wood**
- **metal**
- **cheese**
- **sand**
- **rice**

Energy Words and Forces

- **electricity**
- **sunshine**
- **radiation**
- **heat**
- **magnetism**

Subjects

- **French**
- **chemistry**
- **economics**
- **science**
- **math**

Grouped Concepts

- **fruit**
- **money**
- **food**
- **vocabulary**
- **news**

Information and Abstract Concepts

- **information**
- **advice**
- **education**
- **democracy**
- **intelligence**

Uncountable Plurals

Sometimes in English, we do use uncountable nouns in plural forms. This is most commonly done with liquids and substances. It usually takes on the meaning of "cups of", "bottles of" or "types of".

Examples:

- We'll have **two coffees**. *CUPS OF COFFEE*
- I bought **three waters**. *BOTTLES OF WATER*
- The company produces **two leathers**. *TYPES OF LEATHER*

Different Meanings

There are certain words which have multiple meanings. It is possible for one meaning to be countable and the other to be uncountable. Take for example the word "light":

Examples:

- I couldn't see anything because there was no **light**. *UNCOUNTABLE NOUN*
- The Christmas tree was covered with **hundreds of lights**. *COUNTABLE NOUN*

Generally, the rules are still the same. The first use of "light" is a form of energy. The second use of "light" means "small light bulbs", which are normal countable objects.

Even

The following is a mini-tutorial on the various uses of the word "even." After you have studied the tutorial, complete the associated exercises. If you already know how to use "even," you can skip the explanation and go directly to the exercises.

USE

When a strong statement is made, the statement is often followed with an example containing "even." The word "even" adds shock, surprise, or excitement to the example.

Examples:

- **He loses everything. He even lost his own wedding ring!**
- **John has amnesia and he can't remember anything about the past. He can't even remember his own name!**
- **He could become anything. He could even become President of the United States!**
- **I love that author, and I have all of his books - even the ones which are out of print.**

Even Though / Even When / Even If

USE

"Even" can be combined with the words "though," "when" and "if." It emphasizes that a result is unexpected. Study the following examples and explanations to learn how these expressions differ.

Examples:

- **Even though Bob studied very hard, he still failed his French tests.**
BOB ALWAYS STUDIED HARD. BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, HE FAILED THE TESTS.
- **Even when Bob studied very hard, he still failed his French tests.**
BOB OCCASIONALLY STUDIED HARD, BUT IT DIDN'T REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE. EVERY TIME HE STUDIED, HE STILL FAILED.
- **Even if Bob studied very hard, he still failed his French tests.**
BOB DIDN'T NORMALLY STUDY VERY HARD. BUT IN THE RARE SITUATION WHEN HE DID TRY TO STUDY HARD, HE STILL FAILED THE TEST.
- **Jerry is never happy. Even though you do everything his way, he is still dissatisfied.**
YOU DO EVERYTHING HIS WAY, BUT HE IS STILL DISSATISFIED.
- **Jerry is never happy. Even when you do everything his way, he is still dissatisfied.**
YOU SOMETIMES TRY DOING THINGS HIS WAY, BUT HE IS STILL DISSATISFIED.
- **Jerry is never happy. Even if you do everything his way, he is still dissatisfied.**
YOU HAVE TRIED DOING THINGS HIS WAY ONCE OR TWICE, BUT IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE BECAUSE HE IS STILL DISSATISFIED.

IMPORTANT

These expressions are not always interchangeable; the context of the sentence will affect your choice:

- "Even though" is used when something is always done or a fact is mentioned.
- "Even when" is used when something is occasionally done.
- "Even if" is used when something is rarely done or just imagined.

Examples:

- Even though the interview went terribly yesterday, Cheryl got the job. **Correct**
THE INTERVIEW WENT TERRIBLY, BUT SHE GOT THE JOB.
- Even when the interview went terribly yesterday, Cheryl got the job. **Not Correct**
THIS SENTENCE IS INCORRECT BECAUSE THE INTERVIEW DID NOT GO TERRIBLY MORE THAN ONE TIME. THERE WAS ONLY ONE INTERVIEW SO "WHEN" IS NOT THE RIGHT WORD FOR THIS SENTENCE.
- Even if the interview went terribly yesterday, Cheryl got the job. **Correct**
YOU HAVE NOT TALKED TO CHERYL SINCE HER INTERVIEW. YOU IMAGINE THAT THE INTERVIEW WENT TERRIBLY, BUT YOU THINK SHE PROBABLY GOT THE JOB ANYWAY.
- Even though he wins the lottery jackpot, he won't have enough money to pay off his debt. **Not Correct**
THIS SENTENCE WOULD SUGGEST THAT HE ALWAYS WINS THE LOTTERY.
- Even when he wins the lottery jackpot, he won't have enough money to pay off his debt. **Not Correct**
THIS SENTENCE WOULD SUGGEST THAT HE SOMETIMES WINS THE LOTTERY JACKPOT.
- Even if he wins the lottery jackpot, he won't have enough money to pay off his debt. **Correct**
THERE IS A CHANCE IN A MILLION THAT HE MIGHT WIN THE LOTTERY JACKPOT, BUT IT WOULDN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE BECAUSE HE STILL WOULDN'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO PAY OFF HIS DEBT.

REMEMBER

The meaning and context of the sentence is very important when deciding whether to use "even though," "even when" or "even if."

Even So

USE

"Even so" is very much like the word "but" or "however." "Even so" is different in that it is used with surprising or unexpected results.

Examples:

- **She is loud and unfriendly. Even so, I like her.**
SHE IS LOUD AND UNFRIENDLY, SO IT IS UNEXPECTED THAT I LIKE HER.
- **The bed is extremely large and heavy. Even so, Jim managed to carry it into the house by himself.**
IT IS UNEXPECTED THAT JIM COULD CARRY THE BED BY HIMSELF.
- **Jane was sick for a couple days in Los Angeles. Even so, she said her trip to the United States was great.**
IF SHE WAS SICK, IT IS UNEXPECTED THAT SHE ENJOYED HER TRIP.

Let / Make / Have / Get

The following is a mini-tutorial on the use of the causative verbs "let," "make," "have," and "get." After you have studied the tutorial, complete the associated exercises. If you already know how to use these verbs, you can skip the explanation and go directly to the exercises.

Let

FORM

[let + person + verb]

USE

This construction means "to allow someone to do something."

Examples:

- John let me drive his new car.
- Will your parents let you go to the party?
- I don't know if my boss will let me take the day off.

Make

FORM

[make + person + verb]

USE

This construction means "to force someone to do something."

Examples:

- My teacher made me apologize for what I had said.
- Did somebody make you wear that ugly hat?
- She made her children do their homework.

Have

FORM

[have + person + verb]

USE

This construction means "to give someone the responsibility to do something."

Examples:

- Dr. Smith had his nurse take the patient's temperature.
- Please have your secretary fax me the information.
- I had the mechanic check the brakes.

Get

FORM

[get + person + to + verb]

USE

This construction usually means "to convince to do something" or "to trick someone into doing something."

Examples:

- Susie got her son to take the medicine even though it tasted terrible.
- How can parents get their children to read more?
- The government TV commercials are trying to get people to stop smoking.

Get vs. Have

Sometimes "get someone to do something" is interchangeable with "have someone do something," but these expressions do not mean exactly the same thing.

Examples:

- **I got the mechanic to check my brakes.**
AT FIRST THE MECHANIC DIDN'T THINK IT WAS NECESSARY, BUT I CONVINCED HIM TO CHECK THE BRAKES.
- **I had the mechanic check my brakes.**
I ASKED THE MECHANIC TO CHECK THE BRAKES.

So / Such

The following is a mini-tutorial on the use of "so" and "such." After you have studied the tutorial, complete the associated exercises. If you already know how to use "so" and "such," you can skip the explanation and go directly to the exercises.

So + Adjective

USE

"So" can be combined with adjectives to show extremes. This form is often used in exclamations.

Examples:

- The music is so loud! I wish they would turn it down.
- The meal was so good! It was worth the money.

USE with "That"

The above form can be combined with "that" to show extremes which lead to certain results. The "that" is usually optional.

Examples:

- The music is so loud that I can't sleep.
- The music is so loud I can't sleep.
- The meal was so good that we decided to have dinner at the same restaurant again tonight.
- The meal was so good we decided to have dinner at the same restaurant again tonight.

So + Adverb

USE

"So" can be combined with adverbs to show extreme actions. This form is often used in exclamations.

Examples:

- She spoke so quickly! She sounded like an auctioneer.
- He paints so well! I am sure he is going to become a famous artist.

USE with "That"

The above form can be combined with "that" to show extreme actions which lead to certain results. The "that" is usually optional.

Examples:

- She spoke so quickly that I couldn't understand her.
- She spoke so quickly I couldn't understand her.
- He paints so well that they offered him a scholarship at an art school in Paris.
- He paints so well they offered him a scholarship at an art school in Paris.

So + Many / Few + Plural Noun

USE

"So" can be combined with "many" or "few" plus a plural noun to show extremes in amount. This form is often used in exclamations.

Examples:

- I never knew you had so many brothers!
- She has so few friends! It's really quite sad.

USE with "That"

The above form can be combined with "that" to show extremes in amount which lead to certain results. The "that" is usually optional.

Examples:

- I never knew you had so many brothers that you had to share a bedroom.
- I never knew you had so many brothers you had to share a bedroom.
- She has so few friends that she rarely gets out of the house.
- She has so few friends she rarely gets out of the house.

So + Much / Little + Non-countable Noun

USE

"So" can be combined with "much" or "little" plus a non-countable noun to show extremes in amount. This form is often used in exclamations.

Examples:

- Jake earns so much money! And he still has trouble paying the rent.
- They have so little food! We need to do something to help them.

USE with "That"

The above form can be combined with "that" to show extremes in amount which lead to certain results. The "that" is usually optional.

Examples:

- Jake earns so much money that he has lost all sense of what a dollar is worth.
- Jake earns so much money he has lost all sense of what a dollar is worth.
- They have so little food that they are starving to death.
- They have so little food they are starving to death.

So + Much / Little / Often / Rarely**USE**

"So" can be combined with words like "much," "little," "often," or "rarely" to describe how much or how often someone does an action. This form is often used in exclamations.

Examples:

- Earl drinks so much! It's not good for his health.
- My sister visits us so rarely! I really miss her.

USE with "That"

The above form can be combined with "that" to show the results of extreme actions. The "that" is usually optional.

Examples:

- Earl drinks so much that it is starting to interfere with his work.
- Earl drinks so much it is starting to interfere with his work.
- My sister visits us so rarely that my kids wouldn't even recognize her.
- My sister visits us so rarely my kids wouldn't even recognize her.

Such + Adjective + Noun

USE

"Such" can be combined with an adjective and a noun to show extremes. This form is often used in exclamations.

Examples:

- Don has such a big house! I think it's a little ridiculous.
- Shelly has such beautiful eyes! I have never seen that shade of blue before.

USE with "That"

The above form can be combined with "that" to show extremes which lead to certain results. The "that" is usually optional.

Examples:

- Don has such a big house that I actually got lost on the way to the bathroom.
- Don has such a big house I actually got lost on the way to the bathroom.
- Shelly has such beautiful eyes that she got a job as a make-up model.
- Shelly has such beautiful eyes she got a job as a make-up model.

NOTE

Remember that without the noun you need to use "so."

Examples:

- such beautiful eyes that
- so beautiful that

Such + Judgemental Noun

USE

"Such" can also be combined with judgemental nouns for emphasis. This form is often used in exclamations.

Examples:

- He is such an idiot! He says the stupidest things.
- She is such a genius! We could never do this work without her.

USE with "That"

The above form can be combined with "that" to show certain results. The "that" is usually optional.

Examples:

- **He is such an idiot that nobody would hire him.**
- **He is such an idiot nobody would hire him.**
- **She is such a genius that they immediately gave her a position at the university.**
- **She is such a genius they immediately gave her a position at the university.**

Such + Noun (This type of...)

USE

"Such" can also mean "this type of..." or "that type of..."

Examples:

- **The archeologist had never seen such writing before he discovered the tablet.**
THIS/THAT TYPE OF WRITING
- **She usually doesn't receive such criticism.**
THIS/THAT KIND OF CRITICISM
- **Frank has never made such mistakes before.**
THESE/THOSE KINDS OF MISTAKES

Subjunctive

The following is a mini-tutorial on the use of the Subjunctive. After you have studied the tutorial, complete the associated exercises. If you already know how to use this verb form, you can skip the explanation and go directly to the exercises.

FORM

Use the simple form of the verb. The simple form is the infinitive without the "to." The simple form of the verb "to go" is "go." The Subjunctive is only noticeable in certain forms and tenses.

USE

The Subjunctive is used to emphasize urgency or importance. It is used after certain expressions (see below).

Examples:

- I suggest that he study.
- Is it essential that we be there?
- Don recommended that you join the committee.

NOTICE

The Subjunctive is only noticeable in certain forms and tenses. In the examples below, the Subjunctive is not noticeable in the you-form of the verb, but it is noticeable in the he-form of the verb.

Examples:

- You try to study often. *YOU-FORM OF "TRY"*
- It is important that you try to study often. *SUBJUNCTIVE FORM OF "TRY" LOOKS THE SAME.*
- He tries to study often. *HE-FORM OF "TRY"*
- It is important that he try to study often. *SUBJUNCTIVE FORM OF "TRY" IS NOTICEABLE HERE.*

Verbs Followed by the Subjunctive

The Subjunctive is used after the following verbs:

to advise (that)
to ask (that)
to command (that)
to demand (that)
to desire (that)
to insist (that)
to propose (that)
to recommend (that)
to request (that)
to suggest (that)
to urge (that)

Examples:

- Dr. Smith asked that Mark submit his research paper before the end of the month.
- Donna requested Frank come to the party.
- The teacher insists that her students be on time.

Expressions Followed by the Subjunctive

The Subjunctive is used after the following expressions:

It is best (that)
It is crucial (that)
It is desirable (that)
It is essential (that)
It is imperative (that)
It is important (that)
It is recommended (that)
It is urgent (that)
It is vital (that)
It is a good idea (that)
It is a bad idea (that)

Examples:

- It is crucial that you be there before Tom arrives.
- It is important she attend the meeting.
- It is recommended that he take a gallon of water with him if he wants to hike to the bottom of the Grand Canyon.

Negative, Continuous and Passive Forms of Subjunctive

The Subjunctive can be used in negative, continuous and passive forms.

Negative Examples:

- The boss insisted that Sam not be at the meeting.
- The company asked that employees not accept personal phone calls during business hours.
- I suggest that you not take the job without renegotiating the salary.

Passive Examples:

- Jake recommended that Susan be hired immediately.
- Christine demanded that I be allowed to take part in the negotiations.
- We suggested that you be admitted to the organization.

Continuous Examples:

- It is important that you be standing there when he gets off the plane.
- It is crucial that a car be waiting for the boss when the meeting is over.
- I propose that we all be waiting in Tim's apartment when he gets home.

Should as Subjunctive

After many of the above expressions, the word "should" is sometimes used to express the idea of subjunctiveness. This form is used more frequently in British English and is most common after the verbs "suggest," "recommend" and "insist."

Examples:

- The doctor recommended that she should see a specialist about the problem.
- Professor William suggested that Wilma should study harder for the final exam.

Who, Whom, Whose

The following is a mini-tutorial on the uses of "who," "whom," and "whose." If you already know how to use these words, you can skip the explanation and go directly to the exercises.

Subjects, Objects and Possessive Forms

To understand how to use "who," "whom," and "whose," you first have to understand the difference between subjects, objects, and possessive forms.

Subjects do an action:

- **He loves movies.**
- **She goes to school.**
- **We enjoy Chinese food.**

Objects receive an action:

- **The teachers like him.**
- **Thomas knows her.**
- **The actor smiled at us.**

Possessive forms tell us the person something belongs to:

- **His bike is broken.**
- **I like her new book.**
- **The teacher graded our homework.**

"Who" is a Subject Pronoun

"Who" is a subject pronoun like "he," "she" and "we" in the examples above. We use "who" to ask which person does an action or which person is a certain way.

Examples:

- **Who made the birthday cake?**
- **Who is in the kitchen?**
- **Who is going to do the dishes?**

"Whom" is an Object Pronoun

"Whom" is an object pronoun like "him," "her" and "us." We use "whom" to ask which person receives an action.

Examples:

- **Whom are you going to invite?**
- **Whom did he blame for the accident?**
- **Whom did he hire to do the job?**

"Whose" is a Possessive Pronoun

"Whose" is a possessive pronoun like "his," "her" and "our." We use "whose" to find out which person something belongs to.

Examples:

- **Whose camera is this?**
- **Whose dog is barking outside?**
- **Whose cell phone keeps ringing?**

"Who," "Whom" and "Whose" in Indirect Questions

The sentence below contains an example of an indirect question:

- **I don't know whom he invited.**

Such sentences usually start with a phrase such as: "I am not sure" or "He doesn't know" or "We don't care." Just ignore the first part of the sentence and look at the indirect question when deciding whether to use "who," "whom" or "whose." Ask yourself if the indirect question requires a subject, object, or possessive form.

Examples:

- **He doesn't know who the boss of the company is. *SUBJECT OF THE INDIRECT QUESTION***
- **I don't care whom you invite. *OBJECT OF THE INDIRECT QUESTION***
- **She isn't sure whose car that is. *"WHOSE" SHOWS POSSESSION OF CAR.***

"Who," "Whom" and "Whose" in Adjective Clauses

The sentence below contains an example of an adjective clause:

- **I know the man who won the contest.**

Adjective clauses are used to describe a noun in the main sentence. In the example above, the adjective clause tells us about "the man." Just ignore the main sentence and look at the adjective clause when deciding whether to use "who," "whom" or "whose." Ask yourself if the adjective clause requires a subject, object, or possessive form.

Examples:

- **We knew the actress who starred in the movie. SUBJECT OF ADJECTIVE CLAUSE**
- **They hired the man whom we interviewed last week. OBJECT OF ADJECTIVE CLAUSE**
- **She knew the family whose house we bought. "WHOSE" SHOWS POSSESSION OF HOUSE.**

"Whom" Less Common

The form "whom" is becoming less and less common in English. Many native English speakers think "whom" sounds outdated or strange. This trend is particularly common in the United States. Especially when combined with prepositions, most people prefer to use "who" as the object pronoun. To most native English speakers, the examples below sound quite natural.

Examples:

- **Who did you come to the party with?**
- **I don't know who he gave the book to.**
- **That is the woman who I was talking to.**
- **Who did you get that from?**
- **Do you have any idea who he sold his car to?**
- **That is the person who I got the information from.**

Irregular Verb Dictionary

Englishpage.com's Irregular Verb Dictionary for English learners contains over 370 irregular verbs used in modern English. View our Extended Irregular Verb Dictionary, which contains over 470 verbs including rare and antiquated forms.

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- Forms which are primarily used in British English are in *italics*.
- To view a definition of the verb, click on the infinitive form.
- To learn more about confusing forms, click on the information link [?].

A		
Infinitive	Simple Past	Past Participle
arise	arose	arisen
awake	awakened / awoke	awakened / awoken
B		
backslide	backslid	backslidden / backslid
be	was, were	been
bear	bore	born / borne
beat	beat	beaten / beat
become	became	become
begin	began	begun
bend	bent	bent
bet	bet / betted [?]	bet / betted [?]
bid (farewell)	bid / bade	bidden

bid (offer amount)	bid	bid
bind	bound	bound
bite	bit	bitten
bleed	bled	bled
blow	blew	blown
break	broke	broken
breed	bred	bred
bring	brought	brought
broadcast	broadcast / broadcasted	broadcast / broadcasted
browbeat	browbeat	browbeaten / browbeat
build	built	built
burn	burned / burnt [?]	burned / burnt [?]
burst	burst	burst
bust	busted / bust	busted / bust
buy	bought	bought
C		
cast	cast	cast
catch	caught	caught
choose	chose	chosen
cling	clung	clung
clothe	clothed / clad [?]	clothed / clad [?]

come	came	come
cost	cost	cost
creep	crept	crept
crossbreed	crossbred	crossbred
cut	cut	cut

D

daydream	daydreamed / daydreamt [?]	daydreamed / daydreamt [?]
deal	dealt	dealt
dig	dug	dug
disprove	disproved	disproved / disproven
dive (jump head-first)	dove / dived	dived
dive (scuba diving)	dived / dove	dived
do	did	done
draw	drew	drawn
dream	dreamed / dreamt [?]	dreamed / dreamt [?]
drink	drank	drunk
drive	drove	driven
dwell	dwelt / dwelled [?]	dwelt / dwelled [?]

E

eat	ate	eaten
-----	-----	-------

F		
fall	fell	fallen
feed	fed	fed
feel	felt	felt
fight	fought	fought
find	found	found
fit (tailor, change size)	fitted / fit [?]	fitted / fit [?]
fit (be right size)	fit / <i>fitted</i> [?]	fit / <i>fitted</i> [?]
flee	fled	fled
fling	flung	flung
fly	flew	flown
forbid	forbade	forbidden
forecast	forecast	forecast
forego (also forgo)	forewent	foregone
foresee	foresaw	foreseen
foretell	foretold	foretold
forget	forgot	forgotten / <i>forgot</i> [?]
forgive	forgave	forgiven
forsake	forsook	forsaken
freeze	froze	frozen
frostbite	frostbit	frostbitten

G

get	got	gotten / got [?]
give	gave	given
go	went	gone
grind	ground	ground
grow	grew	grown

H

hand-feed	hand-fed	hand-fed
handwrite	handwrote	handwritten
hang	hung	hung
have	had	had
hear	heard	heard
hew	hewed	hewn / hewed
hide	hid	hidden
hit	hit	hit
hold	held	held
hurt	hurt	hurt

I

inbreed	inbred	inbred
inlay	inlaid	inlaid
input	input / inputted	input / inputted

interbreed	interbred	interbred
interweave	interwove / interweaved	interwoven / interweaved
interwind	interwound	interwound
J		
jerry-build	jerry-built	jerry-built
K		
keep	kept	kept
kneel	knelt / kneeled	knelt / kneeled
knit	knitted / knit	knitted / knit
know	knew	known
L		
lay	laid	laid
lead	led	led
lean	leaned / leant [?]	leaned / leant [?]
leap	leaped / leapt [?]	leaped / leapt [?]
learn	learned / learnt [?]	learned / learnt [?]
leave	left	left
lend	lent	lent
let	let	let
lie	lay	lain
lie (not tell truth) REGULAR	lied	lied

light	lit / lighted	lit / lighted
lip-read	lip-read	lip-read
lose	lost	lost
M		
make	made	made
mean	meant	meant
meet	met	met
mecast	mecast	mecast
misdeal	misdealt	misdealt
misdo	misdid	misdone
mishear	misheard	misheard
mislay	mislaid	mislaid
mislead	misled	misled
mislearn	mislearned / mislearnt [?]	mislearned / mislearnt [?]
misread	misread	misread
misset	misset	misset
misspeak	misspoke	misspoken
misspell	misspelled / misspelt [?]	misspelled / misspelt [?]
misspend	misspent	misspent
mistake	mistook	mistaken
misteach	mistaught	mistaught

misunderstand	misunderstood	misunderstood
miswrite	miswrote	miswritten
mow	mowed	mowed / mown
N		
No irregular verbs beginning with "N."		
O		
offset	offset	offset
outbid	outbid	outbid
outbreed	outbred	outbred
outdo	outdid	outdone
outdraw	outdrew	outdrawn
outdrink	outdrank	outdrunk
outdrive	outdrove	outdriven
outfight	outfought	outfought
outfly	outflew	outflew
outgrow	outgrew	outgrown
outleap	outleaped / outleapt [?]	outleaped / outleapt [?]
outlie (not tell truth) REGULAR	outlied	outlied
outride	outrode	outridden
outrun	outran	outrun

outsell	outsold	outsold
outshine	outshined / outshone [?]	outshined / outshone [?]
outshoot	outshot	outshot
outsing	outsang	outsung
outsit	outsat	outsat
outsleep	outslept	outslept
outsmell	outsmelled / outsmelt [?]	outsmelled / outsmelt [?]
outspeak	outspoke	outspoken
outspeed	outsped	outsped
outspend	outspent	outspent
outswear	outswore	outsworn
outswim	outswam	outswum
outthink	outthought	outthought
outthrow	outthrew	outthrown
outwrite	outwrote	outwritten
overbid	overbid	overbid
overbreed	overbred	overbred
overbuild	overbuilt	overbuilt
overbuy	overbought	overbought
overcome	overcame	overcome
overdo	overdid	overdone

overdraw	overdrew	overdrawn
overdrink	overdrank	overdrunk
overeat	overate	overeaten
overfeed	overfed	overfed
overhang	overhung	overhung
overhear	overheard	overheard
overlay	overlaid	overlaid
overpay	overpaid	overpaid
override	overrode	overridden
overrun	overran	overrun
oversee	oversaw	overseen
oversell	oversold	oversold
oversew	oversewed	oversewn / oversewed
overshoot	overshot	overshot
oversleep	overslept	overslept
overspeak	overspoke	overspoken
overspend	overspent	overspent
overspill	overspilled / overspilt [?]	overspilled / overspilt [?]
overtake	overtook	overtaken
overthink	overthought	overthought
overthrow	overthrew	overthrown

overwind	overwound	overwound
overwrite	overwrote	overwritten
P		
partake	partook	partaken
pay	paid	paid
plead	pleaded / pled	pleaded / pled
prebuild	prebuilt	prebuilt
predo	predid	predone
premake	premade	premade
prepay	prepaid	prepaid
presell	presold	presold
preset	preset	preset
preshrink	preshrank	preshrunk
proofread	proofread	proofread
prove	proved	proven / proved
put	put	put
Q		
quick-freeze	quick-froze	quick-frozen
quit	quit / quitted [?]	quit / quitted [?]
R		
read	read (sounds like "red")	read (sounds like "red")

reawake	reawoke	reawaken
rebid	rebid	rebid
rebind	rebound	rebound
rebroadcast	rebroadcast / rebroadcasted	rebroadcast / rebroadcasted
rebuild	rebuilt	rebuilt
recast	recast	recast
recut	recut	recut
redeal	redealt	redealt
redo	redid	redone
redraw	redrew	redrawn
refit (replace parts)	refit / refitted [?]	refit / refitted [?]
refit (retailor)	refitted / refit [?]	refitted / refit [?]
regrind	reground	reground
regrow	regrew	regrown
rehang	rehung	rehung
rehear	reheard	reheard
reknit	reknitted / reknit	reknitted / reknit
relay (for example tiles)	relaid	relaid
relay (pass along) REGULAR	relayed	relayed
relearn	relearned / relearnt [?]	relearned / relearnt [?]
relight	relit / relighted	relit / relighted

remake	remade	remade
repay	repaid	repaid
reread	reread	reread
rerun	reran	rerun
resell	resold	resold
resend	resent	resent
reset	reset	reset
resew	resewed	resewn / resewed
retake	retook	retaken
reteach	retaught	retaught
retear	retore	retorn
retell	retold	retold
rethink	rethought	rethought
retread	retread	retread
retrofit	retrofitted / retrofit [?]	retrofitted / retrofit [?]
rewake	rewoke / rewaked	rewaken / rewaked
rewear	rewore	reworn
reweave	rewove / reweaved	rewoven / reweaved
rewed	rewed / rewedded	rewed / rewedded
rewet	rewet / rewetted [?]	rewet / rewetted [?]
rewin	rewon	rewon

rewind	rewound	rewound
rewrite	rewrote	rewritten
rid	rid	rid
ride	rode	ridden
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
roughcast	roughcast	roughcast
run	ran	run

S

sand-cast	sand-cast	sand-cast
saw	sawed	sawed / sown
say	said	said
see	saw	seen
seek	sought	sought
sell	sold	sold
send	sent	sent
set	set	set
sew	sewed	sewn / sewed
shake	shook	shaken
shave	shaved	shaved / shaven
shear	sheared	sheared / shorn

shed	shed	shed
shine	shined / shone [?]	shined / shone [?]
shit	shit / shat / shitted	shit/ shat / shitted
shoot	shot	shot
show	showed	shown / showed
shrink	shrank / shrunk	shrunk
shut	shut	shut
sight-read	sight-read	sight-read
sing	sang	sung
sink	sank / sunk	sunk
sit	sat	sat
slay (kill)	slew / slayed	slain / slayed
slay (amuse) REGULAR	slayed	slayed
sleep	slept	slept
slide	slid	slid
sling	slung	slung
slink	slinked / slunk	slinked / slunk
slit	slit	slit
smell	smelled / smelt [?]	smelled / smelt [?]
sneak	sneaked / snuck	sneaked / snuck
sow	sowed	sown / sowed

speak	spoke	spoken
speed	sped / speeded	sped / speeded
spell	spelled / spelt [?]	spelled / spelt [?]
spend	spent	spent
spill	spilled / spilt [?]	spilled / spilt [?]
spin	spun	spun
spit	spit / spat	spit / spat
split	split	split
spoil	spoiled / spoilt [?]	spoiled / spoilt [?]
spoon-feed	spoon-fed	spoon-fed
spread	spread	spread
spring	sprang / sprung	sprung
stand	stood	stood
steal	stole	stolen
stick	stuck	stuck
sting	stung	stung
stink	stunk / stank	stunk
strew	strewed	strewn / strewed
stride	strode	stridden
strike (delete)	struck	stricken
strike (hit)	struck	struck / stricken

string	strung	strung
strive	strove / strived	striven / strived
sublet	sublet	sublet
sunburn	sunburned / sunburnt [?]	sunburned / sunburnt [?]
swear	swore	sworn
sweat	sweat / sweated	sweat / sweated
sweep	swept	swept
swell	swelled	swollen / swelled
swim	swam	swum
swing	swung	swung
T		
take	took	taken
teach	taught	taught
tear	tore	torn
telecast	telecast	telecast
tell	told	told
test-drive	test-drove	test-driven
test-fly	test-flew	test-flown
think	thought	thought
throw	threw	thrown
thrust	thrust	thrust

tread	trod	trodden / trod
typecast	typecast	typecast
typeset	typeset	typeset
typewrite	typewrote	typewritten
U		
unbend	unbent	unbent
unbind	unbound	unbound
unclothe	unclothed / unclad [?]	unclothed / unclad [?]
underbid	underbid	underbid
undercut	undercut	undercut
underfeed	underfed	underfed
undergo	underwent	undergone
underlie	underlay	underlain
undersell	undersold	undersold
underspend	underspent	underspent
understand	understood	understood
undertake	undertook	undertaken
underwrite	underwrote	underwritten
undo	undid	undone
unfreeze	unfroze	unfrozen
unhang	unhung	unhung

unhide	unhid	unhidden
unknit	unknitted / unknit	unknitted / unknit
unlearn	unlearned / unlearnt [?]	unlearned / unlearnt [?]
unsew	unsewed	unsewn / unsewed
unsling	unslung	unslung
unspin	unspun	unspun
unstick	unstuck	unstuck
unstring	unstrung	unstrung
unweave	unwove / unweaved	unwoven / unweaved
unwind	unwound	unwound
uphold	upheld	upheld
upset	upset	upset

V

No commonly used irregular verbs beginning with "V."

W

wake	woke / waked	woken / waked
waylay	waylaid	waylaid
wear	wore	worn
weave	wove / weaved	woven / weaved
wed	wed / wedded	wed / wedded
weep	wept	wept

wet	wet / wetted [?]	wet / wetted [?]
whet REGULAR	whetted	whetted
win	won	won
wind	wound	wound
withdraw	withdrew	withdrawn
withhold	withheld	withheld
withstand	withstood	withstood
wring	wrung	wrung
write	wrote	written
X		
No irregular verbs beginning with "X."		
Y		
No irregular verbs beginning with "Y."		
Z		
No irregular verbs beginning with "Z."		

Extended Irregular Verb Dictionary

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- To view a definition of the verb, click on the infinitive form.
- To learn more about confusing forms, click on the information link [?].

A		
Infinitive	Simple Past	Past Participle
abide	abided / abode	abided
alight	alighted / alit	alighted / alit
arise	arose	arisen
awake	awakened / awoke	awakened / awoken
B		
backbite	backbit	backbitten
backslide	backslid	backslidden / backslid
be [am, is, are]	was, were	been
bear	bore	born / borne
beat	beat	beaten / beat
become	became	become
befall	befell	befallen
beget	begat / begot	begotten

begin	began	begun
behold	beheld	beheld
bend	bent	bent
bereave	bereaved / bereft	bereaved / bereft
beseech	besought / beseeched	besought / beseeched
beset	beset	beset
bestrew	bestrewed	bestrewn / bestrewed
bet	bet / betted [?]	bet / betted [?]
betake	betook	betaken
bethink	bethought	bethought
bid (farewell)	bid / bade	bidden
bid (offer amount)	bid	bid
bind	bound	bound
bite	bit	bitten
bleed	bled	bled
blow	blew	blown
break	broke	broken
breed	bred	bred
bring	brought	brought
broadcast	broadcast / broadcasted	broadcast / broadcasted
browbeat	browbeat	browbeaten / browbeat

build	built	built
burn	burned / burnt [?]	burned / burnt [?]
burst	burst	burst
bust	busted / bust	busted / bust
buy	bought	bought
C		
cast	cast	cast
catch	caught	caught
chide	chided / chid	chided / chidden
choose	chose	chosen
clap	clapped / clapt [?]	clapped / clapt [?]
cling	clung	clung
clothe	clothed / clad [?]	clothed / clad [?]
colorbreed	colorbred	colorbred
come	came	come
cost	cost	cost
creep	crept	crept
crossbreed	crossbred	crossbred
cut	cut	cut
D		
dare	dared / durst	dared / durst

daydream	daydreamed / daydreamt [?]	daydreamed / daydreamt [?]
deal	dealt	dealt
dig	dug	dug
dight	dighted / dight	dighted / dight
disprove	disproved	disproved / disproven
dive (jump head-first)	dove / dived	dived
dive (scuba diving)	dived / dove	dived
do	did	done
draw	drew	drawn
dream	dreamed / dreamt [?]	dreamed / dreamt [?]
drink	drank	drunk
drive	drove	driven
dwell	dwelt / dwelled [?]	dwelt / dwelled [?]

E

eat	ate	eaten
enwind	enwound	enwound

F

fall	fell	fallen
feed	fed	fed
feel	felt	felt

fight	fought	fought
find	found	found
fit (tailor, change size)	fitted / fit [?]	fitted / fit [?]
fit (be right size)	fit / fitted [?]	fit / fitted [?]
flee	fled	fled
fling	flung	flung
fly	flew	flown
forbear	forbore	forborne
forbid	forbade	forbidden
fordo	fordid	fordone
forecast	forecast	forecast
forego (also forgo)	forewent	foregone
foreknow	foreknew	foreknown
forerun	foreran	forerun
foresee	foresaw	foreseen
foreshow	foreshowed	foreshown / foreshowed
forespeak	forespoke	forespoken
foretell	foretold	foretold
forget	forgot	forgotten / forgot [?]
forgive	forgave	forgiven
forsake	forsook	forsaken

forswear	forswore	forsworn
fraught	fraught	fraught
freeze	froze	frozen
frostbite	frostbit	frostbitten

G

gainsay	gainsaid	gainsaid
get	got	gotten / got [?]
gild	gilded / gilt	gilded / gilt
give	gave	given
go	went	gone
grind	ground	ground
grow	grew	grown

H

hagride	hagrode	hagridden
halterbreak	halterbroke	halterbroken
hamstring	hamstrung	hamstrung
hand-feed	hand-fed	hand-fed
handwrite	handwrote	handwritten
hang	hung	hung
hang (kill by hanging)	hanged / hung	hanged / hung
have	had	had

hear	heard	heard
heave	heaved / hove	heaved / hove
hew	hewed	hewn / hewed
hide	hid	hidden
hit	hit	hit
hold	held	held
hurt	hurt	hurt
I		
inbreed	inbred	inbred
inlay	inlaid	inlaid
input	input / inputted	input / inputted
Inset	Inset	Inset
interbreed	interbred	interbred
intercut	intercut	intercut
interlay	interlaid	interlaid
interset	interset	interset
interweave	interwove / interweaved	interwoven / interweaved
interwind	interwound	interwound
inweave	inwove / inweaved	inwoven / inweaved
J		
jerry-build	jerry-built	jerry-built

K

keep	kept	kept
kneel	knelt / kneeled	knelt / kneeled
knit	knitted / knit	knitted / knit
know	knew	known

L

lade	laded	laden / laded
landslide	landslid	landslid
lay	laid	laid
lead	led	led
lean	leaned / leant [?]	leaned / leant [?]
leap	leaped / leapt [?]	leaped / leapt [?]
learn	learned / learnt [?]	learned / learnt [?]
leave	left	left
lend	lent	lent
let	let	let
lie	lay	lain
lie (not tell truth) REGULAR	lied	lied
light	lit / lighted	lit / lighted
lip-read	lip-read	lip-read
lose	lost	lost

M

make	made	made
mean	meant	meant
meet	met	met
misbecome	misbecame	misbecome
miscast	miscast	miscast
miscut	miscut	miscut
misdeal	misdealt	misdealt
misdo	misdid	misdone
mishear	misheard	misheard
mishit	mishit	mishit
mislay	mislaid	mislaid
mislead	misled	misled
mislearn	mislearned / mislearnt [?]	mislearned / mislearnt [?]
misread	misread	misread
missay	missaid	missaid
missend	missent	missent
misset	misset	misset
misspeak	misspoke	misspoken
misspell	misspelled / misspelt [?]	misspelled / misspelt [?]
misspend	misspent	misspent

misswear	misswore	missworn
mistake	mistook	mistaken
misteach	mistaught	mistaught
mistell	mistold	mistold
misthink	misthought	misthought
misunderstand	misunderstood	misunderstood
miswear	miswore	misworn
miswed	miswed / miswedded	miswed / miswedded
miswrite	miswrote	miswritten
mow	mowed	mowed / mown

N

No irregular verbs beginning with "N."

O

offset	offset	offset
outbid	outbid	outbid
outbreed	outbred	outbred
outdo	outdid	outdone
outdraw	outdrew	outdrawn
outdrink	outdrank	outdrunk
outdrive	outdrove	outdriven
outfight	outfought	outfought

outfly	outflew	outfrown
outgrow	outgrew	outgrown
outlay	outlaid	outlaid
outleap	outleaped / outleapt [?]	outleaped / outleapt [?]
outlie (not tell truth) REGULAR	outlied	outlied
output	output / outputted	output / outputted
outride	outrode	outridden
outrun	outran	outrun
outsee	outsaw	outseen
outsell	outsold	outsold
outshine	outshined / outshone [?]	outshined / outshone [?]
outshoot	outshot	outshot
outsing	outsang	outsung
outsit	outsat	outsat
outsleep	outslept	outslept
outsmell	outsmelled / outsmelt [?]	outsmelled / outsmelt [?]
outspeak	outspoke	outspoken
outspeed	outsped	outsped
outspend	outspent	outspent
outspin	outspun	outspun
outspring	outsprang / outsprung	outsprung

outstand	outstood	outstood
outswear	outswore	outsworn
outswim	outswam	outswum
outtell	outtold	outtold
outthink	outthought	outthought
outthrow	outthrew	outthrown
outwear	outwore	outworn
outwind	outwound	outwound
outwrite	outwrote	outwritten
overbear	overbore	overborne / overborn
overbid	overbid	overbid
overbreed	overbred	overbred
overbuild	overbuilt	overbuilt
overbuy	overbought	overbought
overcast	overcast	overcast
overcome	overcame	overcome
overcut	overcut	overcut
overdo	overdid	overdone
overdraw	overdrew	overdrawn
overdrink	overdrank	overdrunk
overeat	overate	overeaten

overfeed	overfed	overfed
overhang	overhung	overhung
overhear	overheard	overheard
overlay	overlaid	overlaid
overleap	overleaped / overleapt [?]	overleaped / overleapt [?]
overlie	overlay	overlain
overpay	overpaid	overpaid
override	overrode	overridden
overrun	overran	overrun
oversee	oversaw	overseen
oversell	oversold	oversold
overset	overset	overset
oversew	oversewed	oversewn / oversewed
overshoot	overshot	overshot
oversleep	overslept	overslept
oversow	oversowed	oversown / oversowed
overspeak	overspoke	overspoken
overspend	overspent	overspent
overspill	overspilled / overspilt [?]	overspilled / overspilt [?]
overspin	overspun	overspun
overspread	overspread	overspread

overspring	oversprang / oversprung /	oversprung
overstand	overstood	overstood
overstrew	overstrewed	overstrewn / overstrewed
overstride	overstrode	overstridden
overstrike	overstruck	overstruck
overtake	overtook	overtaken
overthink	overthought	overthought
overthrow	overthrew	overthrown
overwear	overwore	overworn
overwind	overwound	overwound
overwrite	overwrote	overwritten

P

partake	partook	partaken
pay	paid	paid
plead	pleaded / pled	pleaded / pled
prebuild	prebuilt	prebuilt
predo	predid	predone
premake	premade	premade
prepay	prepaid	prepaid
presell	presold	presold
preset	preset	preset

preshrink	preshrank	preshrunk
presplit	presplit	presplit
proofread	proofread	proofread
prove	proved	proven / proved
put	put	put

Q

quick-freeze	quick-froze	quick-frozen
quit	quit / quitted [?]	quit / quitted [?]

R

read	read (sounds like "red")	read (sounds like "red")
reawake	reawoke	reawaken
rebid	rebid	rebid
rebind	rebound	rebound
rebroadcast	rebroadcast / rebroadcasted	rebroadcast / rebroadcasted
rebuild	rebuilt	rebuilt
recast	recast	recast
recut	recut	recut
redeal	redealt	redealt
redo	redid	redone
redraw	redrew	redrawn

reeve	reeved / rove	reeved / rove
refit (replace parts)	refit / refitted [?]	refit / refitted [?]
refit (retailor)	refitted / refit [?]	refitted / refit [?]
regrind	reground	reground
regrow	regrew	regrown
rehang	rehung	rehung
rehear	reheard	reheard
reknit	reknitted / reknit	reknitted / reknit
relay (for example tiles)	relaid	relaid
relay (pass along) REGULAR	relayed	relayed
relearn	relearned / relearnt [?]	relearned / relearnt [?]
relight	relit / relighted	relit / relighted
remake	remade	remade
rend	rent / rended	rent / rended
repay	repaid	repaid
reread	reread	reread
rerun	reran	rerun
resell	resold	resold
resend	resent	resent
reset	reset	reset
resew	resewed	resewn / resewed

retake	retook	retaken
reteach	retaught	retaught
retear	retore	retorn
retell	retold	retold
rethink	rethought	rethought
retread	retread	retread
retrofit	retrofitted / retrofit [?]	retrofitted / retrofit [?]
rewake	rewoke / rewaked	rewaken / rewaked
rewear	rewore	reworn
reweave	rewove / reweaved	rewoven / reweaved
rewed	rewed / rewedded	rewed / rewedded
rewet	rewet / rewetted [?]	rewet / rewetted [?]
rewin	rewon	rewon
rewind	rewound	rewound
rewrite	rewrote	rewritten
rid	rid	rid
ride	rode	ridden
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
rive	rived	riven / rived
roughcast	roughcast	roughcast

run	ran	run
S		
sand-cast	sand-cast	sand-cast
saw	sawed	sawed / sown
say	said	said
see	saw	seen
seek	sought	sought
self-feed	self-fed	self-fed
self-sow	self-sowed	self-sown / self-sowed
sell	sold	sold
send	sent	sent
set	set	set
sew	sewed	sewn / sewed
shake	shook	shaken
shave	shaved	shaved / shaven
shear	sheared	sheared / shorn
shed	shed	shed
shine	shined / shone [?]	shined / shone [?]
shit	shit / shat / shitted	shit / shat / shitted
shoe	shoed / shod	shoed / shod
shoot	shot	shot

show	showed	shown / showed
shrink	shrank / shrunk	shrunk
shrive	shrived / shrove	shriven
shut	shut	shut
sight-read	sight-read	sight-read
sing	sang	sung
sink	sank / sunk	sunk
sit	sat	sat
skywrite	skywrote	skywritten
slay (kill)	slew / slayed	slain / slayed
slay (amuse) REGULAR	slayed	slayed
sleep	slept	slept
slide	slid	slid
sling	slung	slung
slink	slinked / slunk	slinked / slunk
slit	slit	slit
smell	smelled / smelt [?]	smelled / smelt [?]
smite	smote	smitten / smote
sneak	sneaked / snuck	sneaked / snuck
sow	sowed	sown / sowed
speak	spoke	spoken

speed	sped / speeded	sped / speeded
spell	spelled / spelt [?]	spelled / spelt [?]
spend	spent	spent
spill	spilled / spilt [?]	spilled / spilt [?]
spin	spun	spun
spit	spit / spat	spit / spat
split	split	split
spoil	spoiled / spoilt [?]	spoiled / spoilt [?]
spoon-feed	spoon-fed	spoon-fed
spread	spread	spread
spring	sprang / sprung	sprung
stall-feed	stall-fed	stall-fed
stand	stood	stood
stave	staved / stove	staved / stove
steal	stole	stolen
stick	stuck	stuck
sting	stung	stung
stink	stunk / stank	stunk
strew	strewed	strewn / strewed
stride	strode	stridden
strike (delete)	struck	stricken

strike (hit)	struck	struck / stricken
string	strung	strung
strip	stripped / stript [?]	stripped / stript [?]
strive	strove / strived	striven / strived
sublet	sublet	sublet
sunburn	sunburned / sunburnt [?]	sunburned / sunburnt [?]
swear	swore	sworn
sweat	sweat / sweated	sweat / sweated
sweep	swept	swept
swell	swelled	swollen / swelled
swim	swam	swum
swing	swung	swung

T

take	took	taken
teach	taught	taught
tear	tore	torn
telecast	telecast	telecast
tell	told	told
test-drive	test-drove	test-driven
test-fly	test-flew	test-flown
think	thought	thought

thrive	thrived / threw	thrived / thriven
throw	threw	thrown
thrust	thrust	thrust
tread	trod	trodden / trod
troubleshoot	troubleshoot	troubleshoot
typecast	typecast	typecast
typeset	typeset	typeset
typewrite	typewrote	typewritten

U

unbear	unbore	unborn / unborne
unbend	unbent	unbent
unbind	unbound	unbound
unbuild	unbuilt	unbuilt
unclothe	unclothed / unclad [?]	unclothed / unclad [?]
underbid	underbid	underbid
underbuy	underbought	underbought
undercut	undercut	undercut
underfeed	underfed	underfed
undergo	underwent	undergone
underlay	underlaid	underlaid
underlet	underlet	underlet

underlie	underlay	underlain
underrun	underran	underrun
undersell	undersold	undersold
undershoot	undershot	undershot
underspend	underspent	underspent
understand	understood	understood
undertake	undertook	undertaken
underthrust	underthrust	underthrust
underwrite	underwrote	underwritten
undo	undid	undone
undraw	undrew	undrawn
unfreeze	unfroze	unfrozen
unhang	unhung	unhung
unhide	unhid	unhidden
unhold	unheld	unheld
unknit	unknitted / unknit	unknitted / unknit
unlade	unladed	unladen / unladed
unlay	unlaid	unlaid
unlead REGULAR	unleaded	unleaded
unlearn	unlearned / unlearnt [?]	unlearned / unlearnt [?]
unmake	unmade	unmade

unreeve	unreeved / unrove	unreeved / unrove
unsay	unsaid	unsaid
unsew	unsewed	unsewn / unsewed
unsling	unslung	unslung
unspin	unspun	unspun
unstick	unstuck	unstuck
unstring	unstrung	unstrung
unswear	unswore	unsworn
unteach	untaught	untaught
unthink	unthought	unthought
unweave	unwove / unweaved	unwoven / unweaved
unwind	unwound	unwound
unwrite	unwrote	unwritten
uphold	upheld	upheld
upset	upset	upset
V		
vex	vexed / vext [?]	vexed / vext [?]
W		
wake	woke / waked	woken / waked
waylay	waylaid	waylaid
wear	wore	worn

weave	wove / weaved	woven / weaved
wed	wed / wedded	wed / wedded
weep	wept	wept
wet	wet / wetted [?]	wet / wetted [?]
whet REGULAR	whetted	whetted
win	won	won
wind	wound	wound
withdraw	withdrew	withdrawn
withhold	withheld	withheld
withstand	withstood	withstood
wring	wrong	wrong
write	wrote	written

X

No irregular verbs beginning with "X."

Y

No irregular verbs beginning with "Y."

Z

No irregular verbs beginning with "Z."

1. About Englishpage.com's Irregular Verb Dictionary

Englishpage.com's Irregular Verb Dictionary and Extended Irregular Verb Dictionary are both products of ongoing research Englishpage.com is conducting into irregular verb usage in both American and British English.

This research is intended to determine how irregular verb usage has evolved during the last century and to produce the most complete and up-to-date irregular verb reference on the Internet.

These current dictionaries provide information on over 470 verbs and include infinitive, simple past and past participle forms. In some situations, multiple simple past or past participle forms are included. Forms which are listed first are more frequently used in modern English. In addition, information on the differences between British and American irregular verb usage has been included.

Each entry in our dictionary links into OneLook Dictionary Search, which provides definitions, translations into select languages and links to additional reference sources (some of which include recorded pronunciations). Problematic or confusing forms are followed by the symbol [?], which links into supplementary information on that form.

Our Irregular Verb Dictionary and Extended Irregular Verb Dictionary continue to reflect Englishpage.com's preference for simple, user-friendly web design and quickly loading pages.

2. The Most Frequently Used Form

In some situations, multiple simple past or past participle forms are included in Englishpage.com's Irregular Verb Dictionary and Extended Irregular Verb Dictionary. Based on Englishpage.com's research, forms which are listed first are more frequently used in modern English.

Our tests were conducted on the Internet using a variety of highly targeted searches of English language media sources, electronic texts, and the World Wide Web. In some situations, a form may only be listed in the Extended Irregular Verb Dictionary because it was determined that the form was either extremely rare or antiquated.

3. British Forms

Although many textbooks and dictionaries clearly list specific irregular verb forms as "American" or "British," Englishpage.com's research has clearly shown that very few irregular verb forms are exclusively British or American.

Most of our research has shown that virtually every irregular verb form traditionally listed as "British" frequently shows up in American media and web texts. The frequency of these occurrences excludes the possibility that these texts have been produced by British English speakers living in the United States. In addition, virtually every "American" form tested not only showed up in British media sources and web texts, but in most cases, they actually showed up more frequently than the traditionally "British" forms.

This is not to say that there are no significant differences in irregular verb usage

between American and British English speakers. However, our research does indicate that these differences tend to be highly exaggerated.

4.T- Forms

T-forms include: burnt, clapt, crept, dealt, dreamt, dwelt, felt, leant, leapt, learnt, meant, spelt, smelt, spilt, spoilt, stript, vext

T-forms can be divided into two categories: those with a vowel change and those without a vowel change.

T-forms with a vowel change include: crept, dealt, dreamt, felt, leapt, meant

The t-forms with a vowel change are still very common in modern English. In fact, crept, dealt, felt and meant are the only accepted forms. In the case of dreamt and leapt, although dreamt and leapt are still quite common and acceptable in both written and spoken English, the regular forms dreamed and leaped seem to be more popular in modern usage.

T-forms without a vowel change include: burnt, clapt, dwelt, leant, learnt, spelt, smelt, spilt, spoilt, stript, vext

The t-forms without a vowel change are slowly disappearing from the language. Dwelt is the only form in this category which is more frequently used than the regular -ed form. Burnt, leant and learnt are still relatively common in spoken English and fairly common in written English. Spelt, smelt, spilt and spoilt are quickly disappearing. Stript, clapt and vext are rarely used in contemporary English. For this reason, they are only listed in our Extended Irregular Verb Dictionary.

It should be noted that although many t-forms are listed in texts as distinctly "British" forms, our research indicates they are disappearing in British English as well.

5.Bet / Betting, Quit / Quitted and Wet / Wetted

Betted, quitted and wetted are often listed as "British" forms. In reality, our research indicates the irregular forms bet, quit and wet are more common than the regular forms in both American and British English. Although the irregular forms are preferred, the regular forms betted, quitted and wetted are still used in contemporary English in both America and, more commonly, in Britain.

6. Clothed / Clad

Most English speakers use the form clothed as the simple past and past participle of to clothe. However, clad is still often used as an adjective to mean "dressed in." Our research turned up many such examples:

bikini clad
iron clad
rubber clad
towel clad

clad in protective clothing

7. Fit vs. Fitted - Two Options

One of the few significant differences that we found between American irregular verbs and British irregular verbs was with the form fitted.

In British English, the form fitted seems to be preferred.

In American English, the situation appears to be more complicated. Our research indicates that Americans generally prefer the simple past and past participle form fit. However, when the verb fit is used to mean "to tailor," they seem to prefer fitted.

8. Shined vs. Shone

With the verb shine, the form shined is preferred in everyday English, possibly because shone sounds too much like the form shown, which is the past participle of show. However, in Internet searches the form shone occurs quite frequently because of its use in literary English.

9. Gotten vs. Got as Past Participle

For the verb got, gotten is often listed as the American past participle and got as the British past participle. Our research shows that gotten is actually more common than got in British English. This is also true for the verb forget.

The situation is complicated by the fact that have got is often used to mean "to have" or "must" such as in the following examples:

I've got five dollars.

I've got to go soon.

Phrasal Verb Dictionary

To look up a phrasal verb, click a letter in the menu on the left.

separable verbs (talk * into)

inseparable verbs (run into +)

object can be in both positions (look * up +)

What are phrasal verbs?

1. A phrasal verb is a verb plus a preposition or adverb which creates a meaning different from the original verb.

Example:

I ran into my teacher at the movies last night. *RUN + INTO = MEET*

He ran away when he was 15. *RUN + AWAY = LEAVE HOME*

2. Some phrasal verbs are intransitive. An intransitive verb cannot be followed by an object.

Example:

He suddenly showed up. *"SHOW UP" CANNOT TAKE AN OBJECT*

3. Some phrasal verbs are transitive. A transitive verb can be followed by an object.

Example:

I made up the story. *"STORY" IS THE OBJECT OF "MAKE UP"*

4. Some transitive phrasal verbs are separable. The object is placed between the verb and the preposition. In this Phrasal Verb Dictionary, separable phrasal verbs are marked by placing a * between the verb and the preposition / adverb.

Example:

I talked my mother into letting me borrow the car.

She looked the phone number up.

5. Some transitive phrasal verbs are inseparable. The object is placed after the preposition. In this Phrasal Verb Dictionary, inseparable phrasal verbs are marked by placing a + after the preposition / adverb.

Example:

I ran into **an old friend** yesterday.

They are looking into **the problem**.

6. Some transitive phrasal verbs can take an object in both places. In this Phrasal Verb Dictionary, such phrasal verbs are marked with both * and +.

Example:

I looked **the number** up in the phone book.

I looked **up** **the number** in the phone book.

7. **WARNING!** Although many phrasal verbs can take an object in both places, you must put the object between the verb and the preposition if the object is a pronoun.

Example:

I looked **the number** up in the phone book.

I looked **up** **the number** in the phone book.

I looked **it** **up** in the phone book. **CORRECT**

I looked **up** **it**-in the phone book. **INCORRECT**

Also try our **Verb + Preposition Dictionary** to
look up standard verb + preposition
combinations.

Phrasal Verb A	Definition	Example
act up	behave or function improperly	I think I need to take my car to the mechanic because it's acting up again.
add * up +	calculate a sum	I added up the receipts and it totaled \$135.46.
add up to +	equal an amount	The total expenses added up to \$325.00.
add up	make sense	Her story doesn't add up. I think she is lying.
ask * out +	invite on a date	I can't believe that Joe finally asked me out on a date!
ask * over +	invite to one's home	Why don't we ask the Johnsons over for dinner?
Phrasal Verb B	Definition	Example
back down	stop defending your opinion in a debate	Jane never backs down. She always wins arguments.
back out	not keep (a promise, agreement, deal)	Sam backed out at the last second.
back out of +	not keep (a promise, agreement, deal)	Sam backed out of the agreement at the last second.
back * up +	give support	You need examples to back up your opinion.

back up	move backwards, reverse	Could you back up a little so I can open this drawer?
bawl * out	criticize, reprimand (inf.)	She bawled him out for arriving late.
bear down on +	bite	The soldier had to bear down on the leather strap while the doctor removed a bullet from the soldier's arm.
bear down on +	take strong measures against	The U.S.A. is bearing down on drug traffickers.
bear on +	have to do with	This information may bear on this case.
bear up	withstand	I didn't think he would bear up so well in that situation.
bear up under +	withstand	How did he bear up under such extreme pressure?
bear with +	be patient	Please bear with me while I fill out the paperwork.
blow in	visit unexpectedly (inf.)	My cousin blew in unexpectedly with his entire family.
blow over	pass without creating a problem	All this negative publicity will blow over in a couple of weeks.

blow * up +	make explode; destroy using explosives	The terrorists blew the bridge up.
blow up	explode	The bomb blew up before they could defuse it.
blow up	suddenly become very angry	When Joan heard the news, she blew up and rushed out of the room.
break * down +	analyze in detail	We need to break this problem down in order to solve.
break down	stop working properly	The truck broke down in the desert.
break down	become mentally ill	She broke down after her husband died.
break * in +	wear or use something new until it is comfortable	I need to break these shoes in before I go hiking.
break in	interrupt	While we were discussing the situation, Terri broke in to give her opinion.
break in	enter a place unlawfully	The burglar broke in between midnight and 3 AM.
break in on +	interrupt (a conversation)	Jane broke in on the conversation and told us to get back to work.

break into +	enter a house unlawfully	The burglar broke into the house between midnight and 3 AM.
break into +	interrupt (a conversation)	Jane broke into the conversation and told us what she knew.
break * off +	end something	Sally broke her engagement to John off.
break out	appear violently	Violent protests broke out in response to the military coup.
break out +	use something extravagant for celebration	He broke out the champagne to celebrate his promotion.
break out of +	escape	The murderer broke out of the prison.
break * up +	break into pieces	I broke the cracker up into pieces and put it in the soup.
break * up +	disperse (a crowd), stop (a fight)	The police broke the demonstration up before it got out of control.
break up	end a relationship	Sam and Diane broke up again. What a rocky relationship.
bring * about +	cause to happen	Democracy brought about great change in the lives of the people.

bring * along +	bring with	When we go to the forest, bring your wildlife guide along.
bring * around	change someone's mind, convince someone	She doesn't want to go, but we'll eventually bring her around.
bring * away	learn or gain (from an experience)	My trip across the Sahara was difficult, but I brought a new appreciation for life away from the experience.
bring * off +	succeed at something difficult or unexpected	You robbed the bank! I can't believe you brought that off.
bring * on +	cause something	I can't believe she got so angry. What brought that on?
bring * out +	highlight, stress	Your new shirt brings out the color of your eyes.
bring * over +	bring to someone's house	When you visit me, why don't you bring over your son?
bring * to	revive consciousness	We used smelling salts to bring her to after she fainted.
bring * up +	mention	I didn't want to bring up the fact that she was unemployed.

bring * up +	raise (a child)	Sam was brought up in South Carolina.
brush * off +	ignore something or someone (inf.)	Mary brushed her ex-boyfriend off at the party.
burn * down +	destroy by setting fire to	The children burned the house down while playing with matches.
burn down	burn until completely gone (building)	Two buildings burnt down in the fire.
burn up	be hot	I am burning up in here - open the window.
burn up	consume by fire	The papers were burned up in the fire.
burn * up +	destroy by fire	He burnt up the files.
buy * out +	buy the shares of a company or the shares the other person owns of a business	Pacific Inc. was bought out by a company from Oregon.
buy * up +	purchase the entire supply of something	We bought up all the beer in the store.
Phrasal Verb C	Definition	Example
call for +	require (as in a recipe)	This recipe calls for milk, not water.
call * off +	cancel something	They called the picnic off because of the rain.

call * off +	order to stop (an invasion, guard dogs)	He called off the dogs when he saw it was his neighbor.
call on +	visit	Mark called on Naomi while he was in town.
call on +	invite someone to speak in a meeting or a classroom	Professor Tanzer called on Tim to answer the question.
call * up +	telephone	I called Sam up to see if he wanted to go to the movies.
calm * down +	make someone relax	You can calm the baby down by rocking her gently.
care for +	nurse someone or something	He cared for the bird until its wing healed.
care for +	like someone or something	I don't care for sour cream on my potato.
carry on +	continue (a conversation, a game)	Please, carry on. I didn't mean to interrupt you.
carry on about +	continue in an annoying way	He kept carrying on about how much money he makes.
carry on with +	continue	I want you to carry on with the project while I am out of town.
carry * out +	complete and/or accomplish something	The secret agent carried out his orders exactly as planned.

carry * over +	continue on a subsequent day, page, etc.	The meeting carried over into lunch time.
catch on	slowly start to understand (inf.)	He caught on after a few minutes.
catch up	make up for lost time	I will never catch up. I am too behind in my work.
catch up with +	speed up to be at the same place as a person or thing in front of you	I had to run to catch up with the others.
catch up on +	become up-to-date	I need to catch up on world events. I haven't seen the news in ages.
check back	return to see if everything is OK	We will check back tomorrow to make sure the project is finished.
check by +	go to a place to see if everything is OK	We need to check by the office to see if the documents are ready.
check for +	try to find	They checked for termites before they bought the house.
check in	enter a hospital, hotel etc.	They need to check in before noon.
check into +	enter a hospital, hotel etc.	They checked into the hotel at 11:00 AM.
check into +	investigate, look for (often through a service)	We are checking into discount flights to London.

check * off +	make a mark next to (an item on a list)	Check each name off the list.
check on +	make sure something is OK	Let's check on the baby again before we go to sleep.
check * out +	investigate, take a look at	He checked out the new restaurant down the street.
check out	leave a hotel, hospital	It's already eleven. We need to check out.
check out of +	leave a hotel, hospital	We checked out of the hotel before ten.
check * over +	closely examine the condition of something	He checked over the old car to see if it was worth buying.
check up on +	investigate someone or something	The police are checking up on the bomb threats.
check * through	send luggage through (to a destination)	Your luggage will be checked through to Paris.
check with +	ask a person for confirmation	He needs to check with his parents before he goes.
cheer * up	make someone feel cheerful	The party really cheered me up.
cheer up	become cheerful	Cheer up. Everything will be all right.

chew * up +	chew into small pieces	The dog chewed up my shoe.
chop * down +	fell/cut (a tree)	The lumberjack chopped the tree down.
chop * up +	chop/cut into small bits	He chopped the meat up into little pieces.
clean * up +	tidy	Susan cleaned the mess up before she left.
clear out	leave (inf.)	Everybody clear out! We're closed.
clear * up +	tidy	Susan cleared up the mess before she left.
close * down +	close a place permanently	The corner market closed down because they didn't have many customers.
close down	close permanently	The bar was closed down because they served alcohol to minors.
close in on +	approach and threaten	The rebels were closing in on the capital, so the government called in the army.
close * up +	close temporarily	They are closing the ski resort up for the summer.
close up	close temporarily	The ski resort is closing up for the summer.

come about	occur / happen	How did you idea for the book come about.
come across +	discover by accident	They came across some lost Mayan ruins in the jungle.
come across +	initially seem or have the appearance	He comes across as rather rude, but he isn't.
come along	accompany someone	If you want, you can come along.
come along with +	accompany	Sam came along with us to the beach.
come along	progress	How's the research paper coming along?
come along with +	progress	How are you coming along with the research paper?
come away	leave a place with a particular feeling or impression	I came away from the meeting feeling like the presentation was a success.
come back	return	What time are you coming back?
come by +	get, receive	How did you come by that new Mercedes?
come by	visit a person at their house	I'll come by later this afternoon.
come down with +	become sick with	He came down with the flu.

come into +	inherit	He came into a large sum of money when his aunt died.
come off +	fall off, break off	The handle came off the suitcase when I picked it up.
come out	appear	I didn't see the car at first. It came out of nowhere.
come out	reveal you are homosexual	Sam finally came out last month.
come out	turn out, end up	The pictures came out great.
come out with +	produce and distribute a product	Microsoft is coming out with a new video game system next month.
come over	visit someone at their house	Why don't you come over after work for dinner?
come to	regain consciousness	Don't worry! She faints all the time. She always comes to after a few minutes.
come through	do what is needed or expected	Terry really came through for us in the end.
come up to +	approach; to equal	The job offer didn't come up to her expectations.

come up with +	produce or create (an idea, a plan)	She came up with a great proposal for the new advertising campaign.
come with +	include (an accessory)	The computer system doesn't come with a printer.
count * in +	include	Did you count expenses in?
count on +	depend/rely on	You can really count on Sarah.
count * out +	exclude	You can count James out. He hates playing poker.
count * up +	add	Count the change up and see how much we have.
crack down on +	become tougher on, better enforce laws on	The police have been cracking down on drunk driving.
crack up	laugh uncontrollably, laugh a lot	When I told the joke, they all cracked up.
crack up at +	laugh uncontrollably about, laugh a lot about	I cracked up at his joke.
cross * out +	draw a line through something, eliminate	Why did you cross my name out on the list?
cut down	decrease the amount of	You eat too much fat. You need to cut down.

cut down on +	decrease the amount of	You need to cut down on your fat intake.
cut in	interrupt	She suddenly cut in and delivered the news
cut in on +	interrupt	She cut in on the conversation and delivered the news.
cut * off	interrupt someone while they were speaking	She cut him off before he said something he would regret later.
cut * off +	sever (with a knife)	His finger was accidentally cut off in an industrial accident.
cut * out +	remove	He cut the bone out of the steak.
cut * out	stop an action	Cut it out! You're bothering me.
cut * up +	cut into small pieces	He cut the beef up and put the pieces in the soup.
Phrasal Verb D	Definition	Example
die away	diminish in intensity	The applause died away after 5 minutes.
die down	diminish in intensity	The controversy about the president's affair finally died down.
die off/out	become extinct	Whales are in danger of dying off.

disagree with +	cause to feel sick due to food or drink	Spicy food disagrees with me.
do away with +	abolish	Some Americans want to do away with the death penalty.
do * over +	repeat	You made many mistakes, so I want you to do the report over.
do without +	manage without something one wants or needs	I couldn't do without a car in California.
draw * up +	create (a contract)	Let's draw an agreement up before we go any further with this project.
dress * down	reprimand severely	The mother dressed her son down for skipping school.
dress down	dress casually	I am dressing down because we're going to a barbecue by the beach.
dress * up +	decorate	You could dress this house up with some bright colors
dress up	wear elegant clothes	She always dresses up at work.
drive * back +	repulse	The invaders were driven back by the army.

drop in	visit someone unexpectedly	Meg dropped in yesterday after dinner.
drop in on +	visit someone unexpectedly	Let's drop in on Julie since we're driving by her house.
drop out	quit an organized activity	Yuri isn't on the team any more. He dropped out.
drop out of +	quit an organized activity (school)	It's difficult to get a good job if you drop out of high school.
drop over	visit someone casually	Drop over any time you feel like talking.
Phrasal Verb E	Definition	Example
eat away	gradually destroy, erode	The heavy rains ate away at the sandstone cliffs.
eat * up +	devour	Ken ate the cookies up.
eat in	eat inside the home	We usually eat in instead of going out for dinner.
eat out	eat outside the home	They eat out once a week.
Phrasal Verb F	Definition	Example
face up to +	acknowledge something difficult or embarrassing	I'll never be able to face up to my colleagues after getting so drunk last night at the work party.

fall back on +	be able to use in case of emergency	Yuki can fall back on her degree in biology if she doesn't succeed in her acting career.
fall behind	go slower than scheduled, lag	Hurry up or you will fall behind!
fall behind in +	go slower than scheduled, lag	Cheryl has missed several days of school and now she is falling behind in her homework.
fall off	decrease	Interest in the project fell off when they realized it wouldn't be profitable.
fall out with +	have an argument with	I had a falling out with my sister last month and we haven't talked to each other since.
fall through	fail to happen	Unfortunately, my trip to Indonesia fell through because I couldn't save enough money.
feel * up +	grope	She sued her boss for sexual harassment after he felt her up.
feel up to +	have the energy to do something	I don't feel up to going out tonight because I had a long day at work.
figure on +	expect	Where do you figure on living when you move to the U.S.A.?

figure * out +	solve something, understand	I finally figured the joke out. Now I understand why everybody was laughing.
figure * up +	calculate	I need to figure my expenses up before I give you an estimate.
fill * in +	complete	Don't forget to fill in all the blanks on the application.
fill in	substitute	Who is going to fill in while you're gone?
fill in for +	substitute for	Miguel filled in for me at the meeting yesterday because I was sick.
fill * out +	complete (an application)	I filled out an application to rent the apartment last week.
fill out	mature, get breasts	Now that you're filling out honey, we need to get you a bra.
fill * up +	fill to the top	Fill the car up with unleaded gas, please.
find out +	discover	You will never find out all my secrets!
find out	discover	Vicky's parents are going to be so mad when they find out she got a tattoo.

fix * up +	repair, renovate, remodel	My neighbors are fixing their house up.
Phrasal Verb G	Definition	Example
get * across +	cause to be understood	It's difficult to get humor across in another language.
get ahead	make progress	I can't get ahead even though I work two jobs.
get ahead of +	surpass	You need to work overtime in order to get ahead of schedule.
get along	have a good relationship	Do you and your sister get along?
get along with +	have a good relationship	Giovanna doesn't get along with her two brothers.
get around +	avoid someone or something	Some people get around paying taxes by hiring a good accountant.
get around	go many places	It's easy to get around town with public transportation.
get away	escape	The bank robbers got away.
get away with +	do something against the rules or illegal and not get caught or punished	My sister gets away with everything!

get by	survive without having the things you need or want	I lost my job, so I am having a hard time getting by this year.
get by on +	survive with minimal resources	It's nearly impossible to get by on making minimum wage.
get by with +	manage with	You don't need a computer. You can get by with the typewriter.
get down to +	get serious about a topic	Enough small talk. Let's get down to business.
get in +	enter (a car, a small boat)	Get in the front seat. You will have more leg room.
get in	enter	Get in. I will give you a ride to school
get * off +	send (a package)	I finally got my sister's birthday present off yesterday.
get * off	remove (a spider from your shirt)	Can you get this spider off my shirt?
get off +	leave (a bus, plane, train, boat)	We need to get off the bus at the next stop.
get off	leave	It's dangerous to sit on the roof. Get off!
get off	idiomatic phrase - How does he justify saying that?!	Where does he get off saying that?!

get * on	put on (clothes)	You should get your jacket on because it's going to be cold.
get on	enter (a bus, train), mount (a horse, a bike)	The train is leaving. Quick, get on!
get on +	enter (a bus, train), mount (a horse, a bike)	Get on my bike and I will give you a ride home.
get on	have a good relationship	Natasha doesn't get on with her co-workers.
get on with +	have a good relationship	Do you get on with your neighbors?
get on with +	continue an activity	Now that the police have left, let's get on with the party!
get out of +	exit (a small boat, car, an enclosed area)	I fell into the water when I tried to get out of the canoe.
get over +	recover (a cold, a disease, an ex-boyfriend/ex-girlfriend)	Jennifer still hasn't gotten over her breakup with Peter.
get through +	complete	We will never get through all of these boxes by 9:00 PM.
get through +	penetrate	We need a stronger drill to get through this wall.
get through	penetrate	The door was jammed, so we couldn't get through.

get through (with) +	finish	Have you gotten through with your homework yet?
get through to +	make contact	It's hard to get through to Janet because her telephone line is always busy.
get * up	cause someone to rise (from a sitting position or a lying position)	Ahmed got Abdul up at 5:30 in the morning by turning the music up really loud.
get up	rise (from sitting position or a bed)	What time did you get up this morning?
give * away +	give something without asking for anything in exchange	Why did Nancy give all of her furniture away?
give * away +	betray (a secret)	We are having a surprise party for Susan next Saturday, so don't give our surprise away by acting suspicious.
give * back +	return something you borrowed	When are you going to give that book back to your teacher?
give in	stop trying	Never give in! You can do it!
give off +	release (a smell, light)	That white flower gives off a beautiful smell.
give * out +	distribute	I earn extra money by giving out brochures on the street.

give out	become very tired (inf.)	I hope this car doesn't give out in the middle of the desert.
give * up +	surrender something	The police told the thief to give his gun up.
give up	surrender	Never give up learning English!
go away	leave	I yelled at the dogs to make them go away.
go back	return	When are you going back to your house?
go by +	go past, go close to, visit quickly	We go by the coffee shop every day.
go back on +	not keep (one's word, a promise)	Don't trust him. He always goes back on his promises.
go down	decrease	The cost of flight tickets is going down.
go for +	try to achieve	Our team is going for the gold medal in the Olympics.
go for	idiomatic phrase - I am craving pepperoni pizza.	I could go for pepperoni pizza.
go in for +	participate (inf.)	Are you going to go in for soccer this year at school?
go into +	discuss in detail	I really don't want to go into that now.

go off	explode	The bomb could go off at any moment.
go off	begin, start (used with signals, alarms, warning sounds)	The alarm clock went off at 6:00 AM.
go off	stop (said of a machine)	The DVD player goes off automatically if you are not using it.
go off	become angry	Maria went off last night after I told her about losing her bike.
go on	continue	Please, go on. Don't let me interrupt you.
go on	happen	This place is a mess! What went on here last night?
go on with +	continue (a plan, a conversation)	I think we should go on with the meeting and stop wasting time.
go out	stop burning (a fire)	The fire went out after three days.
go out	take part in social activities (usually at night)	They love to go out every Saturday night.
go over +	review	Do you usually go over your notes before class?
go over	be well received, succeed	That didn't go over well.

go through +	examine in detail, study carefully	I need to have my lawyer go through this contract before I sign it.
go through +	endure; experience challenges, difficulties or traumas	She has gone through so much in her life.
go through with +	continue or proceed despite difficulties or fears	I have decided to go through with the operation.
go with +	match (clothing)	That shirt doesn't go with those pants.
go with +	accompany a person	I am going with Alejandro to the party.
go with +	have a boyfriend/girlfriend	I am going with Yuri.
go without +	abstain from something you want or need	A person can go without water for three days.
grow under	go out of business	The restaurant went under after it lost its liquor license.
grow up	mature	Your brother needs to grow up and start thinking about his future.
Phrasal Verb H	Definition	Example
hand * back +	return	Is the teacher going to hand back our tests today?

hand * down +	pronounce formally	The president is going to hand his decision down on health care tonight.
hand * down +	give as an inheritance	When my clothes got too small for me as a child, I handed them down to my sister.
hand * in +	submit	I have to hand in an offer by March 12.
hand * out +	distribute	We should hand the concert fliers out at school.
hand * over +	relinquish control of	Hand your car keys over. You're too drunk to drive.
hang around +	stay in a place for fun (inf.)	Maria and Salvador usually hang around the beach after school.
hang around	stay in a place for fun	Those guys just hang around all day.
hang * up +	suspend (clothes on a hanger)	You can hang your jacket up in the front closet.
hang up	put down the telephone receiver	Don't hang up. I'm going to change phones.
hang out +	stay in a place for fun (inf.)	Let's go hang out at the mall tonight.
hang out	stay in a place for fun	What are you doing? -- I'm just hanging out.

have * on +	wear	Do you have your hiking boots on?
have * over	invite guests to your home	Why don't we have Mr. and Mrs. Jones over for dinner tonight.
hear from +	receive news from (a letter, an e-mail)	Have you heard from Steve lately?
hear of +	know about something or somebody	Have you heard of chocolate covered ants?
hit on +	find on accident	I hit on the idea while watching the Simpsons show.
hit on +	flirt with	Jay's friend Marc was trying to hit on my sister last night.
hold * back +	restrain	The police held the demonstrators back while the politicians entered the building.
hold back	not allow to advance in school	The teacher held Frank back a year, so he couldn't enter fifth grade.
hold * off +	restrain	Mr. Johnson held the dog off while we crossed the yard.
hold off on +	delay	We should hold off on making dinner until your parents arrive.

hold on	grasp tightly	Hold on tight! The roller coaster is about to take off.
hold on	tell someone to wait on the telephone	Hold on a minute. I'll get Carol.
hold on to +	grasp tightly	Make sure you hold on to the hand rail as you walk down the stairs.
hold out	not give in, continue to resist	Stop holding out and tell us where you found all of these old records.
hold out against +	not give in, resist	They held out against enemy attack.
hold * up +	delay (a flight, traffic);	The accident held traffic up for an hour.
hold * up +	rob (a bank, a person) with a weapon	Five men held the bank up yesterday.
hook * up +	make the electrical connections required for a machine or information service	Can you hook up the fax machine for me?
Phrasal Verb I	Definition	Example
iron * out	eliminate	We need to have a meeting this week in order to iron out the distribution problems.
Phrasal Verb J	Definition	Example

jack up +	to raise	We need to jack up the car before we change the tire.
joke around	to be humorous	Mike is always joking around at work.
jump in	enter a conversation	Feel free to jump in at any moment while we are talking.
jump to +	make a quick, poorly thought out decision	You shouldn't jump to conclusions.
Phrasal Verb K	Definition	Example
keep * around	have handy, have accessible	I always keep a dictionary around to translate new words.
keep at +	not give up (an activity), to persevere	You should keep at your studies.
keep * away	prevent access to, hold back	Keep the kids away from the cookies.
keep * back	maintain a safe distance, cause to maintain a safe distance	Keep back! The burning building is about to collapse.
keep * down	not vomit, not throw up, keep in one's stomach	If I ate that, I down know if I could keep it down.
keep * in	keep in a particular place, have something in a specific location	When I am not using it, I keep my passport in this drawer.
keep * off	prevent from stepping or climbing on to something	Keep the cat off the couch.

keep on	continue	He kept on talking after everybody asked him to stop.
keep * out	prevent from entering	Keep the dog out of the garden; he keeps digging up the flowers.
keep * over	cover something with, put something above	I keep a tarp over my bicycle at night to prevent it from getting wet.
keep to +	continue, persist in (an activity)	Everybody said she would never finish the puzzle, but she kept to it until it was done.
keep up	stay on the required schedule	You have to keep up if you want to work here.
keep * up +	continue	You are doing a great job! Keep it up.
keep up with +	stay on schedule with (a person, the workload, homework)	I have so much reading that I can't keep up with the writing exercises.
kick back	sit or lie back (to relax)	After work, I like to kick back in front of the TV and relax.
kick in	begin taking effect	The medicine takes one hour to kick in.
Phrasal Verb L	Definition	Example
lay away +	save for the future	Why don't you lay away your wedding outfit?

lay down +	establish (laws, rules)	Lori lays down the law in her class. English only!
lay in on +	scold or criticize severely	My mom really laid in on me when I got home at 4:00 in the morning last night.
lay into +	scold or criticize severely	I saw Reto's mom lay into him when he came home late last night.
lay * off +	suspend someone from a job (during a slow period)	The company was losing money, so they had to lay off 100 workers.
lay * out +	arrange	Why don't we lay the pieces of the table out before we put it together?
leave * out +	not include, omit	Why did your parents leave you out of their vacation plans?
let * down	disappoint	I felt let down when I didn't receive a birthday card from my sister.
let * down	lengthen (pants in sewing)	My uncle is a tailor, so he can let your pants down.
let * out	release	I am happy my brother was let out of prison early.

let * out	make bigger (in sewing)	I need to let out this skirt because I have gained weight.
let up	weaken in intensity	I told her NO a thousand times, but she won't let up.
lie down	rest, recline	I need to lie down before we go out tonight.
lie down on +	rest, recline (on a couch, bed)	I'm going to lie down on the sofa for a while.
lie with +	be decided by	Whether or not you can go to the party lies with your father.
light * up +	illuminate	Let's get some candles to light this room up.
light up +	to smoke	Do you have to light up another cigarette? I thought you were trying to cut down.
live * down +	live in a way that a shameful or embarrassing event is forgotten	Jose will never live down singing that song at the karaoke bar.
live on +	survive from	I could live on bread and cheese.
live up to +	keep a standard	It would be hard to live up to her parent's expectations. They are so demanding.

look after +	take care of (a child, a house, a pet)	When my sister goes on vacation, I look after her dog.
look back on +	to remember nostalgically	When I look back on my childhood, I often feel angry.
look down on +	see as inferior	She's so conceited. She looks down on everybody else.
look for +	to seek or search for	I'm looking for my keys. Have you seen them?
look forward to +	anticipate with pleasure	I am looking forward to traveling to New York next year.
look into +	investigate	The police are looking into the murder.
look on	observe as a spectator	Everybody just looked on as the two men fought.
look out	be careful, pay attention, heed a certain danger	Look out, there's a black widow spider on the wall.
look * over +	examine, review	When I'm camping, I look my shoes over before I put them on.
look * up +	search for (in a dictionary)	It takes time to look up new vocabulary words.
look * up +	locate and visit	If you ever travel to California, you should look me up.

look up to +	respect, admire someone	He looks up to his father.
Phrasal Verb M	Definition	Example
make * out	decipher	I can't make out your handwriting. What does this say?
make * out +	write a check or other document	Who should I make this check out to?
make out	succeed	He really made out in the stock market last year.
make out	progress	How is your son making out in his new job?
make out	kiss passionately	I saw Benno and Isabelle making out in the movie theater last night!
make out with +	kiss someone passionately	Did you make out with Sally?
make * over	do again	The teacher made me do my homework over.
make * up +	invent (a story)	Don't believe anything she says. She always makes things up.
make * up +	complete what was missed	Fortunately, my professor let me make up the exam I missed yesterday.

make * up +	put on cosmetics	It takes me 10 minutes to make my face up.
make up	reconcile	You two have been friends for so long that I think you should make up.
make up for +	compensate for	Allen made up for being late by getting me flowers.
mix * up +	confuse	I sometimes mix the verb tenses up.
mix * up +	blend	We need to mix up these different kinds of nuts before we put them in a bowl.
mix * up +	make lively (a party)	Let's mix up this party with a little disco music.
Phrasal Verb N	Definition	Example
name * after +	name a child using another family member's name	I was named after my grandfather.
nod off	fall asleep	The movie was so boring that I nodded off before it was finished.
nose around +	sneak around	I hate it when my mother noses around my room.
Phrasal Verb O	Definition	Example

occur to +	pop into one's mind, come to one's mind	It didn't occur to us that we had left the iron on.
open up	share feelings	I'm glad that John feels comfortable enough around me to open up.
out to + verb	try to	She is out to get revenge now that her husband left her for another woman.
Phrasal Verb P	Definition	Example
pan out	be successful, turn out well	The trip to Vegas didn't pan out.
pass away	die	After battling cancer for several years, he finally passed away at the age of 87.
pass * off +	try to convince someone that something is real	He tried to pass the fake watch off as a real Rolex.
pass * on +	transmit	Please pass this message on to your co- workers.
pass on +	not accept (an invitation to eat or do something)	Jennifer passed on the invitation to join us for dinner.
pass on	die	I am afraid Professor Johnson has passed on.
pass * out +	distribute	We need to pass out these flyers for the concert tomorrow.

pass out	become unconscious	He passed out because the room was too hot.
pass * up +	not take advantage (of an opportunity)	I can't believe she passed up the opportunity to study in Rome.
pay * back +	repay	If I loan you money, will you pay me back.
pay * off +	complete payment on a debt	It took me ten years to pay off my credit card debt.
pay * off +	to bribe	Don't try to pay the police officer off if you get pulled over for speeding.
pick on +	to tease, bully	She keeps picking on me! Make her stop.
pick * out +	choose	Diane picked out a lovely dress for the dance.
pick * up +	to lift an object with the hands	Keep your back straight when you lift the TV up.
pick * up +	come and get someone in a car	What time are you going to pick me up?
pick * up +	learn something without effort	It's possible to pick up enough English in two weeks to get by on your trip to Los Angeles.

pick * up +	try to initiate a relationship with someone (often in a bar)	Some weird guy tried to pick Patricia up at the bar.
pick up	grow, increase (inf.)	Business is really picking up this quarter.
play * down +	make less important (inf.)	The President played down his affair with the intern.
play * up	highlight something (inf.)	She played up her part in the new movie, but it was actually a very small role.
play up to +	flatter someone for your personal advantage	She has been playing up to the boss because she wants a promotion.
point * out +	indicate	I'd like to point out that figures in column two might be outdated.
pull down	earn	He pulls down about \$300,000 a year.
pull in	park (a vehicle)	Mark pulled in too quickly and crashed into the wall.
pull out	depart (a vehicle)	Our train pulls out at 8:00, so don't be late.
pull through	barely survive	I didn't think she was going to make it, but she pulled through in the end.

put * across +	communicate (an idea or suggestion) clearly so that it is understood	I thought Ms. Smith put her ideas across rather clearly in the meeting.
put * away +	return to the proper place of storage	I told you kids to put your toys away.
put * down +	insult, say bad things about	She always puts down people who don't share her opinions.
put in +	officially submit a request (in the armed forces or public services)	He put in for a transfer to the division in Los Angeles.
put * off +	postpone	Don't put off your work - do it now!
put * on +	wear	Make sure you put on a sweater before you go outside.
put * on +	deceive	I didn't believe a thing he said. I think he was putting me on.
put * out +	extinguish (a fire)	Don't use water to put out a grease fire.
put * out +	inconvenience someone	I don't want to put you out, but could you pick me up at the airport.
put out +	spend (usually used with unreasonably large sums of money)	I can't put out that much money each month.

put * up	have a guest stay in your house for a short time	Can you put me up while I'm in town?
put up with +	tolerate	Sandy will not put up with smoking in her house.
Phrasal Verb Q	Definition	Example
quiet * down +	be quiet, or cause to be quiet	The neighbors told us to quiet down last night or they would call the police.
Phrasal Verb R	Definition	Example
read up on +	research a topic for a reason	I need to read up on the company before I go on the job interview.
ring * up	telephone	Jack rung me up last night at 3:00 in the morning.
rule * out +	eliminate	I wouldn't rule out the possibility of moving to another country if I get a good job offer.
run across +	find or meet unexpectedly	I ran across some old photos while I was cleaning my house.
run against +	compete in an election	Gore ran against Bush in the 2000 elections in the U.S.A.

run away	leave home permanently before you are a legal adult	The child ran away because her parents beat her.
run away from +	escape from	The child ran away from its parents.
run * down	trace	Have you run down those phone numbers I asked for last week?
run * down	criticize	My boss runs everyone down.
run * down	hit with a car	My dog was run down by a bus.
run down	lose power, be very tired	You need to wind your watch so it doesn't run down.
run for +	campaign for a government position	Gore is running for president of the U.S.A.
run into +	meet unexpectedly	I ran into my English teacher at the movies last night. She's so nice!
run * off +	make leave	The new government is trying to run the drug traffickers off.
run * off	reproduce (photocopies)	Would you mind running off 10 copies of this document for me?
run off	leave quickly	Why did you run off after the party?

run off	waste water	You shouldn't swim where the sewage runs off into the ocean.
run out of +	not have any more of something	We ran out of milk this morning, so we need to go to the store.
Phrasal Verb S	Definition	Example
save * up +	accumulate (money)	I hope I will be able to save up enough money to go to school.
see about +	arrange or consider something	My dad said he was going to see about buying me a car.
see * off	say good-bye to someone at the beginning of their trip (at the airport, train station)	Did you see your sister off at the train station?
see to +	make sure something happens, arrange	I'll see to it that Mr. Ramirez gets your message.
see * through	finish something despite difficulties	Are you going to be able to see your studies through now that you have a baby?
sell * out	tell on someone	My partner in crime sold me out for a reduced jail sentence.
set * up	arrange a relationship	My mom set me up with her friend's son.

set * up	falsely incriminate a person	I don't think he killed those men. Somebody set him up.
set up +	arrange (an appointment, a meeting, etc.)	I set up an appointment with my doctor at 3:30 this afternoon.
settle on +	make a decision after a period of time	I settled on the job at the oil company.
settle up	pay one's debts	We need to settle up before you move.
show * off +	show to everybody with a lot of pride	He always shows off his new things.
show off	boast, draw attention to oneself	Young boys show off in order to impress girls.
show * up	make someone seem inferior	He's always trying to show up his co-workers in order to get ahead.
show up	arrive without previous notice	I hadn't seen my cousin for years, and all of a sudden, he showed up at my workplace yesterday!
shut * off	stop from functioning	If you don't pay your electric bill, your power is going to get shut off.
shut * up	make quiet	Would someone shut him up! He's talking so loudly that we're going to get in trouble.

slow * down +	make move more slowly	Because Mary's level in English is lower than the rest of the students, she slows the class down.
slow * up +	make move more slowly	Because Mary's level in English is lower than the rest of the students, she slows the class up.
spell * out +	to explain something in a detailed way so that the meaning is clearly understood	He's so stupid that you have to spell everything out for him.
stand by	wait	I need you to stand by and answer the phone when my broker calls.
stand for +	represent	SCUBA stands for "self contained underwater breathing apparatus."
stand for +	tolerate	I won't stand for people criticizing me.
stand out	be very noticeable	Soledad is so beautiful! She really stands out in a crowd.
stand * up	not arrive to a date or an appointment (inf.)	I arranged to meet Joe at the library at 8:00, but he stood me up. I hope he has a good excuse.
stand up for +	defend (something one believes in)	Every individual must stand up for what they believe in.

stand up to +	defend oneself against someone or something	I think you should stand up to your older brother and tell him to stop pushing you around.
stay over	spend the night at a person's house	It takes you so long to take the bus home, so why don't you just stay over?
stick it to +	severely criticize a person (inf.)	My boss really stuck it to me when I arrived late to work for the third time this week.
stick to +	persevere, keep trying	Even though English is a hard language to master, you must stick to it!
stick up for +	defend oneself or opinions	Joseph joined the army because he believes he must stick up for his country.
Phrasal Verb T	Definition	Example
take after +	resemble a parent or relative	I take after my father. Who do you take after?
take * away +	remove, seize or capture	The soldiers took the captives away.
take * back +	retract something you said	I demand that you take back what you said.

take * back +	return an item to a store	The dress my grandmother bought for me didn't fit, so I took it back and exchanged it for a pair of pants.
take * down +	write down what is said	Would you mind taking down my messages while I am on vacation?
take * down +	remove (from a high place)	The city government made the shop take down their bright, neon sign.
take * for	consider, view as	Do you take me for an idiot?
take * in +	learning	Are you taking in all of these phrasal verbs?
take * in +	deceive a person	He was taken in by the con artist.
take * in +	make smaller when sewing	I lost weight, so I need to take some of my skirts to the tailor to have them taken in.
take * off	when a plane or rocket leaves the ground	My stomach felt funny when the plane took off.
take * off +	remove	In many cultures, it is appropriate to take off your shoes when entering a house.
take * off +	leave work or school for a period of time	I was sick last week, so I took a few days off of work.

take off	leave	We took off after dinner.
take on +	accept (responsibilities, work)	She has taken on too much responsibility in this project.
take * over +	take control of	Who is going to take over the family business when Aretha's father dies?
take over	take control of	If the President is assassinated, the Vice-president will take over.
take * out +	accompany a person on a date (for dinner, the movies)	I can't meet you tonight because I am taking Fernanda out to dinner.
take * up +	begin a new hobby	Have you taken up any new hobbies since you moved here?
take * up +	discuss (at a later date)	We should take this issue up in the meeting tomorrow.
take * up +	shorten a garment when sewing	This dress is too long; I am going to take it up.
take up +	occupy space	This couch takes up too much space in the living room.
talk back	respond in an impolite way to an adult	Don't talk back!
talk back to +	respond in an impolite way to an adult	Children should not talk back to their parents.

talk * over +	discuss	I hope my parents talk their relationship problems over before they get divorced.
tear * down +	destroy	The county decided to tear down the dilapidated school and build a new one.
tear * up +	tear or rip into small pieces	I always tear up my personal papers before I throw them out.
tell * off +	criticize a person severely, reprimand (inf.)	Carolina told me off when she found out I was gossiping about her date with Martin.
tell on +	report a crime to the police or bad behavior to a parent	Every time I did something wrong when I was a child, my sister would tell on me.
think * over +	consider	Think over the offer before you sign the contract.
think * through +	consider carefully	You need to think this through carefully before you make a decision.
think * up +	create or invent a false story	I need to think up an excuse for not going to her party.
throw * away +	discard	Don't throw away those bottles; we can recycle them.

throw * out +	discard	I asked him not to throw out the Sunday newspaper because I wanted to save an article.
throw * out +	remove by force from (a room, school, a house, etc.)	Mary threw out her roommate because she stopped paying rent.
throw up	vomit	If you drink too much alcohol, you might throw up.
tie * up +	tie securely	When we dock, make sure you tie the boat up.
tire * out	cause someone to be very tired	Speaking English all day tires me out.
touch on +	talk about for a short time	The presidential candidates touched on the subject of health care during the debates.
touch * up	make the final improvements	We didn't paint the whole kitchen; we just touched up the cabinets.
try * on +	put on to make sure a piece of clothing fits	Try on the pants before you buy them.
try * out	test	Try out this massage chair - it feels great!
turn * away	refuse to deal with or give service	They turned us away at the border because we didn't have visas.

turn * around	change or reverse direction	Turn the car around and go back home.
turn * down +	refuse an offer; reject an application	She turned down the new job in New York, because she didn't want to move.
turn * down +	lower the volume or intensity of a TV, radio, or other machine	I'm studying! Please turn down the TV.
turn * in	submit	You need to turn your essays in next week.
turn in	go to bed (inf.)	It's getting late. I think it is about time to turn in.
turn into +	become something different, transform	When she kissed the frog, it turned into a handsome prince.
turn * off +	stop the function of (a stove, a water faucet, a car, etc.)	Don't forget to turn off the iron before you leave the house.
turn on +	attack unexpectedly	The pit bull suddenly turned on the small child.
turn * on	cause to be excited sexually	Scientists have discovered that the smell of cinnamon turns many people on.
turn * on +	start the function of a TV, a radio, a machine	Turn on the TV. The baseball game starts in a few minutes.

turn * out	produce	The weavers can turn out two or three rugs a month.
turn * out	switch off a light	Turn out the light before you go to bed.
turn out	audience members to a function	Over 100,000 people turned out for the concert.
turn out	end up being	She turned out to be the murderer after all.
turn * over	give to authorities (said of evidence or stolen / lost property)	They turned the wallet over to the police.
turn * up +	increase the volume or intensity of a TV, radio, or other machine	Turn up the TV. I can't hear what they're saying.
turn up	find unexpectedly	My keys turned up in the bedroom.
Phrasal Verb U	Definition	Example
use * up	use all of something	I used up all of the soap, so we need to buy some more.
Phrasal Verb V	Definition	Example
veer away from +	stay away from, avoid	I veer away from the same old summer blockbuster films.
Phrasal Verb W	Definition	Example

wait on +	serve, service (a table)	Each waitress waits on three different tables in the restaurant.
wait up	not sleep because you are waiting for something or someone	Don't wait up.
wait up for +	not sleep because you are waiting for someone or something	Let's wait up for Mary to see how her date went.
wake * up +	awaken someone	The car alarm woke me up at 6:00 in the morning.
wake up	awaken	Wake up. It's time to get ready for work.
wash up	clean oneself	Make sure you wash up before dinner.
wash * up +	clean	If we work together, we can wash the kitchen up in a few minutes.
watch out	be careful	Watch out - there's a rattlesnake!
watch out for +	be careful of	Watch out for snakes while you are hiking in the desert.
wear off	disappear after a period of time	The affects of the medicine will wear off after a few hours.
wear * out	use until something is not useable anymore	If you wear the same shoes every day, you'll wear them out.

wear * out	cause to be very tired	Her three kids wore me out.
wind up +	finish (inf.)	If he doesn't get his act together, he is going to wind up in jail.
wind * up +	tighten the spring of a watch or similar machine	He wound up the toy dog and set it on the floor.
wind * up +	cause an animal or a child to behave wildly	The kids always get wound up when Uncle Henry comes over.
wipe * out +	massacre or destroy	The tidal wave wiped out the small fishing village.
wipe * out	cause to be very tired	After surfing all day, I was completely wiped out.
work * out +	solve	I hope you two can work out your problems.
work out	exercise	I work out three times a week at the fitness center.
work out	be successful	I am glad your new catering business is working out.
write * down +	record	Write down the directions so you don't forget them.

write * out +	write down every word or letter	He wrote out the lyrics so I could understand what the singer was saying.
write * up +	prepare a report	He wrote up a business proposal in order to get a loan.
Phrasal Verb Y	Definition	Example
yak on	to continue talking in an annoying way ("on" can be repeated for emphasis)	He just yakked on and on and on.
yak on about +	to continue talking in an annoying way about something ("on" can be repeated for emphasis)	She just yakked on and on about her husband's new job.
yammer on	to talk in an annoying way or complain ("on" can be repeated for emphasis)	They yammered on and on and on.
yammer on about +	to talk in an annoying way about something or complain about ("on" can be repeated for emphasis)	He just yammered on and on about how horrible the waiter was.
Phrasal Verb Z	Definition	Example
zero in on +	discover, pinpoint	I think I have zeroed in on what has been causing the problem.
zip around +	move quickly from place to place	I zipped around town after work today.

zone out	stop paying attention	He zoned out during class.
zonk out	fall asleep	Jill was so exhausted after taking the TOEFL test that she zonked out before dinner.
zoom in	focus	You need a telephoto lens to zoom in.
zoom in on +	focus on something, pinpoint	She zoomed in on his face while taking the picture.

Verb + Preposition Dictionary

To look up a verb + preposition combination, click a letter in the menu on the left. The following abbreviations are used in this resource:

SO = someone
ST = something

To look up verb + preposition combinations with special idiomatic meanings, try our [Phrasal Verb Dictionary](#).

Verb A + Prep	Example
account for	He accounted for such problems.
accuse SO of ST	He accused her of stealing the money.
adapt to	They adapted to the new culture.
add SO/ST to SO/ST	She added milk to the grocery list.
add to	Translation problems added to the confusion.
adjust to	They adjusted to their new environment.
admit ST to SO	She admitted her real age to everybody.
admit to	She admitted to cheating on the test.
agree on	We agreed on the price.
agree to	He agreed to the new conditions.
agree with	I agree with you.
apologize to SO for ST	I apologized to her for being rude.
appeal to SO for ST	The nation appealed to the UN for assistance.
approve of	The parents approved of the marriage.
argue with SO about SO/ST	Timmy argued with his father about his curfew.
argue with SO over ST	The customer argued with the salesman over the store's return policy.
arrange for SO (to do something)	They arranged for an interpreter to be present.
arrest SO for ST	The police arrested the man for stealing the car.
arrive at (a place)	They arrived at home.

ask for	She asked for help.
Verb B + Prep	Example
base on	The company bases salary on experience.
be absent from (a place)	He was absent from class.
be accustomed to	I am not accustomed to such behavior.
be acquainted with	He is acquainted with many celebrities.
be addicted to ST	He is addicted to heroin.
be afraid of	I am afraid of spiders.
be angry at SO for ST	I am angry at him for what he said.
be angry with SO for ST	I am angry with him for what he said.
be annoyed at SO for ST	He is annoyed at her for spending so much money.
be annoyed with SO for ST	He is annoyed with her for spending so much money.
be anxious about ST	I am anxious about the presentation.
be associated with	He is associated with the company.
be aware of	You are not aware of all the problems.
be blessed with	He is blessed with great musical talent.
be bored by	They were bored to death by his long speech.
be bored with	The interviewers were bored with the repetitive comments.
be capable of ST	He is capable of much more.
be cluttered with ST	The room is clutter with boxes.
be committed to	I am committed to improving my language skills.

be composed of	The meteorite is composed mostly of iron.
be concerned about	I am concerned about his smoking.
be connected to	The DVD player is connected to the TV.
be connected with	They are connected with the project.
be content with	He is content with the results.
be convinced of ST	We are convinced of her innocence.
be coordinated with ST	Testing centers coordinated with the schools to set testing dates.
be crowded in (a building or room)	It is crowded in the auditorium.
be crowded with (people)	The auditorium is crowded with people.
be dedicated to	She is dedicated to improving her grammar skills.
be devoted to	He is devoted to his wife.
be disappointed in	She is disappointed in her son's improvement.
be disappointed with	She is disappointed with her son for not improving.
be discouraged by	He was discouraged by the high costs.
be discouraged from (doing something)	They were discouraged from participating.
be discriminated against	He discriminates against people who are different.
be divorced from SO	Mary is divorced from John.
be done with ST	He is done with the work.
be dressed in	She was dressed in red.
be encouraged with	The staff was encouraged with a profit-sharing program.

be engaged in ST	He was engaged in that research for more than ten years.
be engaged to SO	John was engaged to Mary for six months.
be envious of	I am envious of you for having the opportunity to travel.
be equipped with ST	The expedition is equipped with the latest gear.
be excited about	I am excited about the opportunities.
be exposed to	The workers were exposed to dangerous chemicals.
be faced with	He was faced with many difficult decisions.
be faithful to	They are faithful to their company.
be familiar with	I am familiar with that program.
be famous for	He is famous for climbing Mt. Everest.
be filled with	The boxes are filled with clothes and books.
be finished with	I am finished with my studies.
be fond of	She is fond of her nieces and nephews.
be friendly to SO	He is friendly to new coworkers.
be friendly with SO	He is friendly with new coworkers.
be frightened by	She is frightened by the coyotes calling at night.
be frightened of	The kids are frightened of ghosts.
be furnished with ST	The house is furnished with designer furniture.
be grateful to SO for ST	I am grateful to you for your assistance.
be guilty of ST	He is guilty of the crime.
be happy about ST	I am not happy about the results.

be innocent of ST	He is innocent of the crimes.
be interested in	I am interested in astronomy.
be involved in ST	He is involved in the program.
be involved with	He is involved with many charities.
be jealous of	John is jealous of Mary's close friendship with Tom.
be known for ST	He is known for his humor.
be limited to	The speeches are limited to fifteen minutes each.
be made from ST	The statue is made from old car parts.
be made of (material)	The statue is made of metal.
be married to	She is married to a famous politician.
be opposed to	I am opposed to increasing tuition prices.
be patient with SO	He is patient with his students.
be pleased with	I am pleased with the results.
be polite to SO	She is polite to the visitors.
be prepared for	He is prepared for such questions at the conference.
be protected from	The cave paintings are protected from vandalism.
be proud of	He is proud of his son.
be related to	She is related to the famous artist.
be relevant to	That is not relevant to this conversation.
be remembered for ST	He is remembered for his bravery.
be responsible for	She is responsible for the new policies.

be satisfied with	The teacher is satisfied with the test results.
be scared of	She is scared of snakes.
be terrified of	She is terrified of roaches.
be thankful for	We are thankful for their help.
be tired from (doing something)	He is so tired from jogging.
be tired of (doing something)	He is tired of answering the same questions over and over.
be worried about	I am worried about her.
beg for	They begged for the answer to the riddle.
begin with	Every sentence begins with a capital letter.
believe in	He believes in ghosts.
belong to	I don't belong to that organization.
benefit from	He benefits from the government assistance programs.
blame SO for ST	He blamed his employees for his mistakes.
blame ST on SO	He blamed the company's failure on his employees.
boast about	She boasted about her new Mercedes.
borrow ST from SO	He borrowed money from me.
Verb C + Prep	Example
care about	He cares about what his children watch on TV.
care for	He doesn't care for fish.
catch up with	He caught up with her before she got into the elevator.

cater to	The hotel doesn't cater to tour groups.
charge SO for ST	The restaurant didn't charge me for breaking the glass.
charge SO with ST	The police charged him with drunk driving.
choose between SO/ST and SO/ST	The winner got to choose between a vacation to Tahiti and a new car.
chose ST from ST	The magician chose a lady from the audience to help him with the trick.
collide with	The car collided with a truck.
come from	He comes from Florida.
comment on	She wouldn't comment on the accusations.
communicate with SO	Many people use email to communicate with friends and family abroad.
compare SO/ST to SO/ST	The analyst compared the company's current profits to last year's.
compare SO/ST with SO/ST	He shouldn't compare his younger son with his older son.
compete with	He loves to compete with others.
complain about	They complained about the quality of the hotel.
compliment SO on ST	He complimented her on her new dress.
concentrate on	He needs to concentrate on his work.
concern SO with ST	You shouldn't concern her with our problems.
confess to	He confessed to the crimes.
confuse SO/ST with SO/ST	She confused him with Tom Cruise.
congratulate SO on ST	She congratulated him on his victory.

consent to ST	The parents consented to the request.
consist of	The test consists of 100 multiple choice questions.
contribute to ST	I contributed to the World Wildlife Fund.
convict SO of ST	They convicted him of murder.
cope with	Can he cope with the large amount of work.
correspond with SO	I correspond with them by email.
count on	He counts on their support.
cover with	She covered her sleeping son with the blanket.
crash into	He crashed into the tree.
cure SO of ST	The doctors cured her of the disease.
Verb D + Prep	Example
deal with	He has to deal with many problems.
decide against	He decided against taking the job in New York.
decide between SO/ST and SO/ST	I couldn't decide between the chicken dinner and the sushi.
decide on	He decided on taking the job in Los Angeles.
dedicate ST to SO	He dedicated the song to his girlfriend.
demand ST from SO	He demanded help from his coworkers.
depend on	The cost of the carpet depends on the quality of the weaving.
derive ST from ST	He derives a great deal of pleasure from his work.
deter SO from ST	Nothing could deter her from becoming a policewoman.

devote ST to SO	He devoted the song to his wife.
differ from	Your results differ little from mine.
disagree with	He disagrees with me.
disapprove of	Her parents disapprove of her job choice.
discourage SO from ST	He discouraged his son from quitting school.
discuss ST with SO	I discussed the situation with them.
distinguish between SO/ST and SO/ST	The expert couldn't distinguish between the real painting and the forgery.
distinguish SO/ST from SO/ST	The expert couldn't distinguish the real painting from the forgery.
distract SO from ST	The loud music distracted her from her work.
dream about	I dream about traveling around the world.
dream of	I dream of a day when poverty no longer exists.
dress SO in ST	She dresses her twins in the same clothes.
drink to	They drank to his new job.
Verb E + Prep	Example
elaborate on ST	He elaborated on his earlier comments.
emerge from ST	The dragon emerged from its lair.
escape from (a place)	They escaped from jail.
exchange SO/ST for SO/ST	They exchanged dollars for yen.
exclude SO from ST	He excluded them from the meeting.
excuse SO for ST	She excused them for being late.

expel SO from (a place)	The leader was expelled from the country.
experiment on	They experimented on various ways of preventing the disease.
explain ST to SO	The teacher explained the project to the students.
Verb F + Prep	Example
feel about	He felt bad about what he said.
feel like	I feel like seeing a movie.
fight about	They fought about who had to do the dishes.
fight against	Martin Luther King fought against racism and oppression.
fight for	He fought for improved working conditions.
fight with	He fought with his parents throughout his teen years.
forget about	She forgot about the meeting.
forgive SO for ST	She forgave him for the terrible things he said.
Verb G + Prep	Example
gamble on	I wouldn't gamble on that happening.
gawk at	They just gawked at me as though they didn't understand a thing.
gaze at	She gazed at the sight in wonder.
get back from (a place)	He got back from work at 6 o'clock.
get married to SO	John got married to Mary.
get rid of	He got rid of his old clothes.
get through with	I'm never going to get through with this work.

get tired of	He got tired of the complaining.
get used to	He needs to get used to the new working conditions.
give ST to SO	He gave the book to me.
glare at	She glared at him in disbelief.
gloat at	He gloated at their failure.
grieve for	The nation is grieving for those who died in the accident.
gripe at SO	She always gripes at her husband.
grumble at SO about ST	The old man always grumbles at his wife about their children never visiting.
Verb H + Prep	Example
happen to	What happened to him?
harp on	She is constantly harping on her husband's bad eating habits.
hear about	I have never heard about that policy before.
hear from SO	Have you heard from your son recently?
hear of	Have you ever heard of the Anasazi people?
help SO with ST	He helped me with my homework.
hide ST from SO	He hid his bad report card from his parents.
hinder SO/ST from ST	Rebels are hindering aid workers from accessing the area.
hinge on	Success hinges on his participation in the project.
hope for	The company hopes for better sales in the coming quarter.
Verb I + Prep	Example

insist on	He insists on driving even though he is having vision problems.
insure against	The investment does not insure against loss of income.
interfere in ST	The couple's parents should not interfere in their relationship.
interfere with ST	Don't interfere with the natural balance of nature.
introduce SO/ST to SO/ST	I introduced him to his girlfriend.
invest in	We invested in that company.
invite SO to	I invited her to the party.
involve SO/ST in ST	We involved them in the decision making.
Verb J + Prep	Example
jabber about	He was jabbering about problems at work.
joke about	We love to sit around and joke about old times.
joke with SO about SO/ST	He was joking with me about the mistake I made.
jot down ST	She jotted down notes as he spoke.
Verb K + Prep	Example
keep on (doing something)	She kept on talking
keep SO/ST from (doing something)	I kept her from making the same mistake.
keep ST for SO	He wants to keep the toy for his daughter.
know about	He knows a lot about that subject.
Verb L + Prep	Example
laugh about	She laughed about what the children had done.

laugh at	We always laugh at his jokes.
learn about	I need to learn more about that topic.
lend ST to SO	I lent my dictionary to her.
listen for	The mechanic said I should listen for any squeaking sounds.
listen to	He loves to listen to his MP3 player on the subway.
long for	I long for a week on the beach in Hawaii.
look at	Look at this old picture of my grandmother.
look forward to	I look forward to meeting her parents.
Verb M + Prep	Example
meet with SO	We will meet with the organizers next week.
mistake SO/ST for SO/ST	I mistook him for his twin brother.
Verb N + Prep	Example
nod at	He nodded at the others.
nod to	He nodded to them.
Verb O + Prep	Example
object to	Do you object to my smoking?
operate on	The surgeon operated on the conjoined twins.
Verb P + Prep	Example
participate in ST	We participated in the survey.
pay for	He paid for our meal last night.
persist in	The disease persists in rural farms throughout the

	region.
plan on	We plan on attending the wedding.
praise SO for ST	He praises his son for his good grades.
pray for	The villagers prayed for rain.
prefer SO/ST to SO/ST	We prefer salmon to other kinds of fish.
prepare for	We are preparing for a long winter.
present SO with ST	He will present her with the award for best journalist.
prevent SO/ST from (doing something)	The campaign is designed to prevent young people from drinking.
prohibit SO from (doing something)	The school prohibits students from smoking.
provide for	It is difficult for them to provide for their families.
provide SO with ST	The school provides students with textbooks.
provide SO/ST for SO	The company will provide food and drinks for all.
punish SO for ST	He was punished for his crimes.
Verb Q + Prep	Example
quarrel with SO about ST	They quarreled with the waiter about the mistakes on the bill.
quarrel with SO over ST	He quarreled with her over her political beliefs.
Verb R + Prep	Example
react to	He reacted to the news negatively.
recover from ST	He is recovering from his illness.
refer to ST	He was referring to the chart on page 24.

relate to	She is not related to their family.
rely on	We rely on the latest information to make such decisions.
remind SO of SO/ST	He reminds me of my grandfather.
reply to	We replied immediately to the letter.
rescue SO from SO/ST	He rescued the puppy from the icy lake.
resign from ST	He resigned from the company.
respond to	We responded to the request for help.
result in ST	His outbursts result in his being fired.
retire from ST	He retired from the company after 40 years of faithful service.
Verb S + Prep	Example
save SO from ST	They are working to save mountain gorillas from extinction.
search for	They are searching for signs of life on Mars.
sentence SO to ST	The court sentenced him to 20 years in jail.
separate SO/ST from SO/ST	He separated Billy from the others children.
share ST with SO	She shared her secret with the others.
shout at	The old man shouted at the kids
show ST to SO	He showed the pictures to his friends.
smile at SO	I smiled at the newcomers.
speak to SO about SO/ST	The director spoke to the employees about the changes.
specialize in ST	He specializes in technical translation.

spend (money/time) on	They spent too much money on their new car.
stand for	NASA stands for National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
stare at	Why are they staring at me?
stem from	The corruption charges stem from allegations of bribery.
stop SO from (doing something)	The environmental group stopped them from building the new hotel.
subject SO to ST	They subject the students to unrealistic standards.
subscribe to	He subscribed to that magazine.
substitute SO/ST for SO/ST	You can substitute beef for pork if you don't eat pork.
subtract ST from ST	He subtracted the expenses from the profits.
succeed at ST	He will succeed at anything he does.
succeed in (doing something)	He succeeded in finishing the marathon.
suffer from	She suffers from a rare genetic disorder.
suspect SO of ST	The police suspect them of smuggling drugs over the border.
Verb T + Prep	Example
take advantage of	He took advantage of his connections at the company.
take care of	He takes care of his pets.
talk about	They talked about the recent problems.
talk to	I need to talk to you for a few minutes.
tell SO about ST	He told them about what happened.
thank SO for ST	We thanked them for their hospitality.

think about	He thought about what she had said.
think of	They need to think of ways to reduce costs.
toast to	Let's toast to a long marriage.
translate ST into (a language)	He translated the instructions into Japanese.
trust SO with ST	He trusted the new employee with the combination to the safe.
turn to	They turned to page 123.
Verb U + Prep	Example
use ST for ST	They use wood for fuel.
Verb V + Prep	Example
vote against	She voted against the new proposal.
vote for	He voted for the most popular candidate.
Verb W + Prep	Example
wait for	I waited for them at the restaurant.
warn about	They warned me about pickpockets in the train station.
waste (money/time) on	They wasted money on another new car.
wish for	The child wished for a new bicycle before he blew out the candles on his cake.
work for	I have worked for them for 20 years.
work on	They worked on the proposal for two weeks.
worry about	She worries about her children.
write about	He wrote a book about his life.

write to SO	You need to write to your parents more often.
Verb Y + Prep	Example
yap about	He always yaps about the good old days.
yearn for	He yearns for more adventure in his life.

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a.k.a. = also known as

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